

# THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY



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## LOOK IN YOUR GLASS

BY RUTH GORDON

CHRISTMAS of 1913 may be memorable to most people because it was the last peaceful Christmas before the world was made safe for Democracy, but Christmas 1913 was important to me because I received a present from my only fashionable friend, Virginia Portia Royall, who wintered at Beaufort, South Carolina, and summered at Linekin's Bay, Maine. She was, I think, about twelve years old at this time. I was sixteen. Virginia Portia Royall was a fairy princess who fluttered briefly in and out of my humdrum life. Her name alone set us worlds apart. Virginia Portia Royall! — whereas I had to arise and face the day as plain Ruth Gordon Jones. Jones seemed to me to be a stigma rather than a surname, and sometimes I wondered if perhaps I might not be a changeling, for I really did not feel like a Jones.

The beauty of Virginia's name was rivaled only by her own beauty. She was lovely. Besides all this, I imagined Virginia to be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Her dresses were handmade, bought in stores, — sometimes Paris stores, — whereas I wore homemade

dresses handed down from someone or other and made over for me by my mother. And to cap the climax, her family was exclusive to such a point that I never met them, which display of cautiousness on their part raised them higher in my estimation than anything else they could possibly have done.

Passing Linekin's Bay in a motorboat, on our excursions to Boothbay Harbor, we could see the Royalls' summer home rambling elegantly over the rocks of the point where Linekin's Bay opened out upon the Atlantic Ocean. As we chugged by, we could see the trim Royall yacht riding at anchor in the placid cove opposite their dock, and sometimes we could even glimpse a Royall or two moving about their estate.

Then came the day of the miracle! The annual Children's Party was being held at our little summer resort, when suddenly Mrs. Miles, the great lady of Christmas Cove, appeared in the doorway, holding by the hand Virginia Portia Royall. It was really and truly she! At once the whole party came to a standstill, and we were all graciously allowed to meet her. What remarkable

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attentions I in particular showed to her I cannot now remember, but I came away from that party happy in the knowledge that I was to go up to Mrs. Miles's house the next morning, with two other children, and help to amuse Virginia. I was to spend the morning with Virginia Portia Royall at the great house on the hill, to swim in the icy Maine water pumped exclusively into the glass-enclosed swimming pool. A plunge into it felt like a brisk turn through some sherbet, but icy water was mild persecution compared to the rare enjoyment of the visit.

All this must have taken place in the summer of 1912, but, once I had this small toe hold in the fashionable world, I could not bear to let the door swing shut. I never saw Virginia again until after my diary and my schooling and many things were finished, but I wrote to her regularly, sometimes in answer to one of her letters and sometimes, after a decent interval, in answer to one of my own. My reward was that, two years after the ice bath at Mrs. Miles's, we were still in correspondence with one another, and on the Christmas of 1913 she sent me her first and only Christmas present, a forget-me-not blue, morocco-bound diary. It was easily the most elegant thing in our whole house. And even to-day, after its twenty-five-year journey through Three Arts Clubs, one-night-stand tours, theatrical boardinghouses, second-rate hotels, first-rate hotels, until at last it and I reached the haven of a permanent home—even to-day, as I look at it, I see at a glance that it still has that rare something which, for want of a better word, I shall call *ton*. 'Some class!' would have been my way of describing it in Wollaston, but, as I say, my diary and I have come a long way.

Until I received it I had never felt any urge to keep a diary, but in our household there was a spirit of thrift which compelled us to use any and every gift. Whether we *enjoyed* using it was beside

the point. Frugality had made sterner stuff out of us.

I saw Virginia once more several summers later when she again visited the Miles home in Christmas Cove. That was after my first season on the stage, when I had returned from a tour with Maude Adams's company and Virginia had returned from Mlle. Lea Bouligny's Boarding School at Warrenton, but by now she had become too fashionable for practical purposes; she did not favor knowing an actress—which she alone, of all the world in the year 1916, most flatteringly took me to be. And so this small book, my diary, is all that remains of that glorious moment when I first rubbed elbows, ever so distantly, with the great world of Fashion. Hail and farewell, Haut Monde!

It was a glorious experience while it lasted. It seemed a symbol that I was destined for greater things than our shabby half of a double house at 14 Elmwood Avenue, Wollaston, Massachusetts, where my mother and father and I and our cat hoped, dreamed, and somehow scrimped along—scrimped along on \$37.50 a week which my father earned as foreman at the Mellin's Food factory in Boston, seven miles away.

Thirty-seven-fifty was a small sum, even then, for three people and a cat to live on; and from the struggle which we had with it I think it must *always* have been a small sum. Our existence was hand-me-down and made up out of scraps of nothing, until everything in life seemed to be made over from something else. Yet always there hung over us the bugbear of doctors' bills, the coal bill, the insurance premium, my father's new suit, my mother's new corsets, my new boots which I *would* outgrow. All these things, looming large in our eyes, hung over us, away out of proportion to their intrinsic worth. Looming even larger was the thought that if my father ever got sick the \$37.50 would stop, and then what in-

deed would become of us? In these moments when we harbored such a prospect, my father's wages seemed suddenly larger than the riches of Peru, and he would groan and say that he wished he had never left the sea and that the only place where a man could find peace and comfort was aboard a clipper ship, and that with the death of clipper ships our merchant-marine business went, too, and now America wasn't worth her salt as far as navigation was concerned, and he wished to God he was British, because their consuls always stood by a sailor in port.

This was Choctaw to my mother and me, who had never sailed farther than from New York to Savannah, Georgia, and that only once. So we would look upon my father as one who had been made too wretched by care; for who on earth, with his senses about him, would ever want to be a sailor and go to all the outlandish places my father talked about, such as Bombay, Mozambique, Callao, and Rio? If it had been Paris or London, then we should have approved, but he said he preferred Pernambuco to Paris any day, and London could not hold a candle to Liverpool, although London might be considered a great city by those who had not tried to untangle a vessel from the Tilbury docks. My father was different, and in Wollaston it showed.

I think that my father would have been different in almost any place where he chose to live for he was unswayed by public opinion. He loved reality—trees, birds, flowers, weather, facts, the stars and the planets—and most of all he loved the sea and ships. My mother loved anything that made my father and me happy, whether she personally enjoyed it or not. And I loved myself and Miss O'Neill, my Latin teacher, and all that had to do with the theatre. How we passed our days bore little resemblance to anything we thought and hoped. Our private worlds lay miles removed from the actualities

set down in this small, forget-me-not blue, morocco-bound book:—

### MY DIARY

(*For the Year 1914, my Senior Year at Q. H. S.*)

January 1. — School again today and that visitor for Latin didn't come and I had that blamed Latin lesson perfectly spiff! I was so disappointed I got excused after recess. 'A bad headache.' Ha, ha! This afternoon, after going to the dentist, called on Mrs. Nickerson and had a nice time. Molly Brown was married tonight. We were invited but papa hasn't a dress suit so we couldn't go.

January first and a bad headache go often hand in hand, but mine was not the aftermath of a New Year's celebration. A New Year's celebration seemed to be my trouble. My headache was born of disappointment and an effort to attract attention. My whole life, at this period, was centred in one huge consolidated effort to please and impress my Latin teacher, the beautiful Miss Elizabeth O'Neill, idol of Quincy High School for as many years as she cared to reign. My original plan had been to shine for her in front of the expected visitor, but owing to his absence that scheme had gone askew, leaving me in such a state of frustration that a headache was all I could muster. I hoped that Miss O'Neill and my classmates might take it to be the start of a long, serious illness.

There were very few things I could do for Miss O'Neill, for I should have been ashamed to give her anything humble, and a lavish gift was not within my means. But a gift I *could* give her was to do honor to her teaching, and this was what I had planned to do that day. I had studied the assignment in Vergil with extra care and had arranged my translation of it in a kind of singsong rhythm which I hoped was poetry—blank verse, free verse, or whatever. At any rate, it had taken a good deal of work, for I first had to make a literal

translation for myself, then rearrange it until some of the words rhymed, and then memorize it, so that, whatever part of the passage I was called on for, I could spring up and reel it off fluently, as though I were reading English.

This was the predicament of poverty, for if I could have bought Miss O'Neill a present I should never have thought of twisting my brains in two. But I had figured that through my acute erudition I could let the unknown visitor see what wonders her teaching produced. The only wonder it *did* produce, however, was to convince the class that I was the lucky possessor of a 'pony' or a 'trot,' and for all my pains I was merely regarded as a crook. The blow was too much, and so a bodily ailment was manufactured to try to interest my fellow man. But alas! No one was interested in that either, excepting myself. Ha, ha!

I feel sure I did not mind missing Molly Brown's wedding, for I had learned a forcible lesson in regard to attending all such functions. Once before we had had to refuse a wedding invitation, owing to my father's same lack of a dress suit. That wedding had been the supreme high spot of all Wollaston social activity — the wedding of Gertrude Waterhouse. The Waterhouses were the *rich* family of our town and lived in a white-columned mansion built on a terrace high up on the hill. I scarcely knew what the Waterhouses looked like, but in the early days when my father and mother had first come to live in Wollaston they had joined a whist club to which the Waterhouses also belonged. But time and taxes had long since made that only a memory, and it had been many years since my parents had visited the Waterhouses or vice versa. It must have been a very large wedding indeed for our family to have been included.

However, the arrival of the invitation had caused an excited flurry, and my mother's eyes had lighted up just at the

sight of it; but there was no use even discussing it, for the fact had to be faced that my father had no dress suit, and anything short of a dress suit would have shocked this creamy parchment invitation and brought down shame on all our heads. We may not have had the wherewithal, but we certainly knew what was what. And so, after quite a little talk and more figuring, my mother and father decided to send Miss Gertrude Waterhouse a cut-glass water pitcher and our regrets. The water pitcher was sent direct from Smith, Patterson's and cost just under four dollars. The regrets were written in my mother's waggly handwriting on stationery specially bought for the occasion, from our local merchant, Mr. Shunk. Going or not going — either way — set us back financially quite a bit.

On the evening of the Waterhouse wedding my father was in a taciturn mood all through supper. It was a soft spring night, but perhaps the gentle breezes only served to remind him of the days when he and my mother had first come to Wollaston, a young couple full of high hopes, to whom all men had seemed more nearly equal and the difference between them and their grand neighbors not so clearly defined. I don't think that he minded for himself. It was my mother he was thinking of, and so, to conceal any such feelings, he was good and cross.

I, of course, was all unconscious of this, but I *did* know my father's moods, and that if at such a time anyone asked his permission for anything the answer would be 'NO.' So after supper I drifted out, ostensibly to play, but, once outside, I rushed headlong up to the hill and the scene of the great event. All Wollaston had congregated on Lincoln Avenue in front of the imposing white house, and stood humbly gawking, to see what they could see. I don't remember seeing anything, except bright lights and a throng milling inside, and once I *thought* I saw the bride coming



down the stairs, but afterwards, walking home in the darkness with my brain a little cooled off, I couldn't honestly be sure. Anyway it had been wonderful just standing there, watching a house where such fashionable events were taking place, for even if I couldn't see them I knew that they were going on.

I went home in a kind of mystic trance, unaware even that it was well past nine o'clock, an unheard-of hour for any of our family to be idling through the streets. As I wandered dreamily into our front hall, my father's voice brought me back to my senses with a jerk. 'Where the hell have you been?' he demanded.

'Only up watching the wedding,' I answered, innocent of class pride, for the last time in my life.

'Why, you old goat!' my father shouted at me. 'You old goat!' he kept on shouting; and, grabbing me by the ear, he thumped my head down on our golden-oak dining table, while my mother made faces over his shoulder that I wasn't to mind or get upset. 'You got no earthly pride. You're yellow! You're as yellow as an old goat!' he wound up, letting go of my ear at last. So when Molly Brown was married I am surprised I even took enough notice of the fact to write it down.

*January 2.* — This afternoon I went over to the Cody's to call on Miss Alice Claire Elliott, the first actress I have ever met. She certainly is the prettiest girl and is awfully dear!!! Full of fun!! We had lots of fun dancing. She showed me the South American tango and the real 'Castle Walk.' She's here for a week. I certainly am crazy about her. Tonight I hurriedly decided to go to the Braintree German and I had a wonderful time. The boys are great dancers. John Porter came home with me. He's awfully nice.

Miss Alice Claire Elliott was the first actress I ever knew, and the *only* actress who, as long as I knew her, never once had a job. By a miracle of good fortune,

I met her at an unlikely summer resort where I was visiting a school friend, Katherine Follett. The name of the place was Green Hill Beach, and it was about twenty miles from my home in Wollaston. The Follett family spent their summers in a small cottage, one of a row of cottages built so close together that when a neighbor sneezed the adjoining household automatically said '*Gesundheit*.'

Next door to the Folletts lived the Cody family, and when once Mrs. Cody told me her sister was an actress in New York, there was really nothing I would not have done for Mrs. Cody's sake. And then when she told me that Miss Alice Claire Elliott was actually coming to Green Hill Beach, I remember looking at the youngest Cody child and thinking that she was the darlinest, handsomest creature I had ever seen.

When Miss Alice Claire Elliott actually did arrive, it was after dark, unfortunately, and I could not catch a glimpse of her. But the next morning, as soon as I smelled coffee, I went over to pay my respects. My first New York actress was wearing a kimono and sat idly in the Cody sitting room as though she intended to wear it for the rest of the morning. This at once set her apart from my world, where a kimono was used only to scurry through the hall to the bathroom, or else to undress under before popping a nightgown over one's head. Instantly she became my standard of what all actresses should look like. She was very pretty, with masses of curly red hair and a white velvet complexion, which seemed to dismiss all outdoor, fresh-air existence. A lazy magic seemed to pervade her every move, and round and about her was an aroma of scented rice powder.

Later on in the days to come, everything she wore bedazzled me, and I knew it was just what an actress should wear. All of her dresses clung or else moved with a swish, suggesting, in a nice way, riotous frivolity in the under-

wear beneath. Her whole wardrobe bespoke a land of hope and promise, the antithesis of Wollaston clothes, which fell into two classifications, everyday and best, neither of which had any mystery at all.

Naturally I told Miss Elliott that I was going on the stage, and, to her credit, she neither laughed nor changed the subject. Apparently she took it seriously and advised me not to bother with any nonsense such as dramatic school, but to start acting right off, in a stock company, or a road company, or whatever company I could get myself into. She advised me to consider smart comedy, which was nice of her and optimistic as well, for I was homely, plump, and wore a middy blouse which did not improve me.

Miss Elliott spoke as one who had seen everything come and go. She had been in a road company of *A Pair of Sixes*, playing the lead, and had followed somebody in the ingenue rôle of *Nobody's Widow*, with Blanche Bates as the star. Miss Elliott gave me the feeling that the theatre world was a mass of intrigue. She said she would have got lots of other parts, but she looked too much like Billie Burke and Anne Murdock, who both had a lot of pull, so they had kept her out of New York because she was just their type, only younger. I was happy to hear that youth was in such demand, for it seemed to be the one thing which I had.

I did not see my actress friend for six months until she came to visit the Codys again, in their home at Dorchester, Massachusetts, where I called on her this glorious afternoon of January second. I cannot think why Miss Elliott ever put up with me even for these brief visits, unless it was that an actress must have an audience at all costs, and that the absolutely undivided attention of someone, no matter who it is, is a very satisfying thing.

Attending the Braintree Germans required something of the persistence and

fortitude which my Pilgrim ancestors must have had. They too were willing to surmount any obstacle to get to wherever it was they wanted to go, even to landing in Plymouth Harbor, which my father said was the worst place they could have picked along the whole coast of Massachusetts Bay, for it was freezing in winter and broiling in summer and full of sand bars all the year round. Going to Braintree was full of sand bars, too, and it seems to me, looking back, that there must have been some dance somewhere or other which would have served the purpose just as well and still not have involved such effort. In the first place, to go out in the evening caused trouble with my father, who did not care for any alteration in the routine of our life. So, on the few evenings during the winter when I was invited to attend Miss Hayward's paid Germans at Cochato Hall, Braintree, it meant flinging my father into one of his moods.

No matter how we tried to conceal it, my mother and I brought an eager undercurrent of excitement and rush to our usually stolid dinner table. It smacked of the great world and its doings, and my father wanted no trek with anyone, or even with anyone who *knew* anyone, who put on airs — and that was what Cochato Hall, and Germans, and rushing off in the dead of night at seven-thirty meant where my father was concerned. Dinner over, and dishes washed with the speed of chain lightning, my mother and I rushed upstairs to button and hook and snap each other into our best clothes. My slippers and fan and silk gloves in my dancing-school bag, an old pair of white cotton stockings pulled up over my good silk ones, scarfs tied round our heads, we would rush from the house, either with or without the benediction of a gruff good-bye or a flat statement from my irritated father. We ran down the block from Elmwood Avenue to Newport Avenue, my mother continually

wondering what it was that we must have forgotten and listing, as she ran, everything I had on, to make sure that I *did* have it on. Round the corner of Newport Avenue, with three blocks to go until we came to Wollaston station. There we caught an evening train which rambled fitfully down to Hingham and the south shore of Massachusetts Bay.

Those red plush seats, as promising as the magic carpet of old, the frozen gray moonstone windowpanes, languorous tropical hissing steam heat, and a unique smell, blended of almost everything — an evening smell, perfume of the night, which I can remember to this day! Two or three other young people and their mothers would be going along too, and we all felt a great sense of hospitality and ownership in turning over the red plush seats and making the car our own as we rolled off into the night. Customarily in bed before the Tubular Rivet and Stud factory blew its whistle for the nine-o'clock curfew, we found this voyage into darkness almost too exciting to be endured.

At Braintree there was a short walk through the snow, and then at last our Mecca, Cochato Hall, with its warmth, bright lights weak pink lemonade and five o'clock tea biscuit, and the whole place practically full of fashionable Braintree people, with a small selection from Quincy. Wollaston had no society. We were the rag, tag, and bobtail on the fringe of the Great World's train.

I wish I could remember John Porter, who was kind enough to see me home, but I can only remember things pertaining to him and I am afraid his good deed was eclipsed by the naughty world. His sister Marjorie wore a dress the color of June peas, trimmed round the neck and sleeves with black lace, and I resolved to have one like it. In life there are so few things which are permanent that it is encouraging to know that, although I never have had one, I still wish I had. And I remember that John

Porter's family were *said* to spend their summers at Swampscott, which my mother told me was very fashionable. And in all the eighteen years that I lived in Wollaston I never forgot one fashionable thing, place, person, or allusion.

*January 3.* — This morning I went up to Kay's and coming home we met Clarke Boynton. I was so thrilled!! In the afternoon my sister Clare went back to Washington and I certainly hated to see her go because this is really her last vacation with us. She thinks she'll get married in June. Kay and I went up to Butler's Pond to go skating but the pond was all water so we talked for an hour with Dolly Blackmur and Winifred Marshall. John Porter came down in the afternoon but I was not at home.

To Clarke Boynton I shall always be indebted for the first grown-up compliment I ever received. He said that I had 'a cute shape.' He did not say it to me personally, but to my friend Gladys Bain. At least she said that he said it to her. My ears could hardly believe it at the time, and even now I scarcely know what to think. All my pictures of that period certainly belie the fact, and Clarke Boynton — who, by the way, had a cute shape himself — was very popular with the girls and could surely never have wasted so much as a fleeting glance on me. However, it opened up a new field of thought. I used to repeat the phrase over and over again, softly to myself, and, although steadfastly disbelieving it, I must say it gave me a good deal of simple pleasure. It helped to take up some of the slack of my spare time.

So Clarke colored my dreams, and yet I don't think that in real life I ever said more to him than a shy hello, but I know that whenever I met him on the streets of our town I became so self-conscious that my normal gait suddenly changed to that of some poor soul stricken with locomotor ataxia.

*January 4.*—I never saw it rain harder than today . . . a perfect hurricane, first with rain and then snow. In the morning I read and wrote letters and as long as the weather was so bad I didn't go to church. In the afternoon John Porter came down. He is very nice, I think. I was ~~mad~~ to think I had my old dress on.

Letter writing was so serious a business with me that I kept my correspondence tabulated in a sort of bookkeeping style. I had a blank book, so that I could see just where I stood from day to day. One third of it was devoted to 'Letters Answered,' another third to 'Letters Expected,' and the last third to 'People I am Going to Meet'—'and lure into correspondence' was what the last heading implied.

Writing letters was an inexpensive pleasure, and also it filled up a great hole in my leisure hours. It cost almost nothing, and I embraced it with zeal. Writing paper I bought at bargain sales, and the selection offered exactly suited my tastes, for very little plain white paper was ever marked down. The assortment was usually corn-colored, bright green, or heliotrope, and the brighter it was, the better I was pleased.

Then there were many inexpensive variations to letter writing which were delightful.

There was the novelty of commencing the letter on the back page and ending up with the finish where the beginning should have been. There was the period when it gave more zest to sign my name with the unusual spelling RYTHE. The use of green ink or red ink was always interesting, but best of all I liked sealing wax. It had a cachet of elegance and cost only five cents a stick. And there was that glorious moment of choosing what color to use; and in a house where one took what he could get cheapest and learned to like it afterwards, by a process of will power, *any* choice whatsoever was a tonic to one's soul.

After a period I had scraped together

fourteen different colors. Wonderful to use, and wonderful just to look at. I remember showing my sister the whole fourteen sticks arranged beautifully on the lid of a box, with a careful eye to the color scheme. Naturally it was quite a temptation to her and she selfishly asked me for one, whereupon, much alarmed, I withdrew the whole collection abruptly, and all fourteen sticks fell off the box lid and broke into many pieces on the floor. To this day I think my sister laughed *far* too much.

*January 5.*—Nothing exciting happened at school today excepting that I got *Good* plus in a Latin sight translation—the highest in the class. But this afternoon I went in town and did some shopping and then I went up to the Castle Square Theatre. I was quite scared because a man on Tremont Street pinched me and said, 'Helloa, dear.' I went into Miss Doris Olsson's dressing room while she dressed and of course I had a wonderful time. I am certainly the happiest thing! She says that she is positive that she can get me a position at the Castle Square Theatre next fall to take child parts. She's going to speak to Mr. John Craig about it and then I am to go to her apartment next week.

Miss Doris Olsson was the leading lady of John Craig's Castle Square Theatre Stock Company, an organization so permanent and so enthusiastically supported that it might well have been classified as a Boston habit. Performances every night except Sunday, a daily matinee, and a different play each week. Such was its leisurely clip, and it is remarkable that Miss Doris Olsson, with so much of her time bespoken, ever troubled to *read* any of her letters, let alone answer them, especially one so inconsequential as mine. I had written to ask her for information about the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, where the papers said that she had once been a student.

At this point in my life the question uppermost in my mind was how to get to be an actress. Of course I had heard



of Boston's own Emerson School of Oratory, and also the Curry School of Expression, but those names did not soar with my fancy. The Emerson School of Oratory and the Curry School of Expression smacked of elocution and safety, and what I longed for was the razzle-dazzle of wild Broadway. I remember telling people — not my family, of course — that after I had finished with high school I meant to go to New York and 'be fast.' I had no particular recipe for this, but I thought having a good time would take care of most of the ingredients, topped off by my automatically looking quite dashing, something along Merry Widow lines; and, for sauce and good measure, I meant to 'astonish people.' The latter item was planned very kindly on my part, as a sort of missionary work in reverse, for the news which seeped back to Wollaston about her people who had drifted away held very little astonishment and could hardly even be classified as news. And so, for everyone's sake, off to New York I must go, and once I heard the name 'American Academy of Dramatic Arts' I felt instantly that this was something like.

Miss Olsson's kind heart prompted her to write me that the school was a very good one, and that if I would call on her in her dressing room after a matinee she could tell me about it in more detail. It seemed that not only New York, but even people connected with the place, bred astonishment from the word 'go,' for who in all his born days could imagine that our dowdy postman, Mr. Mullins, would ever drop such a bombshell of magic into our rusty old letter box! I, the child of Annie and Clinton Jones, senior student at Quincy High School, member of the Wollaston Unitarian Church, treasurer of the Lend-a-Hand Society, Ruth Gordon Jones — who, indeed, could ever have foreseen that one dazzling day I should walk out of the front door of 14 Elmwood Avenue and wind up sometime

later at the heady heights of the Castle Square Theatre's stage entrance!

Those were not the days when autograph hunters clogged the alley to meet the star and jostle her into submission to get her signature, sometimes tearing off bits of her clothes in the fray. To me — and I think the feeling was general among stage-struck youngsters — actors and actresses were so godlike that I should never have dared to hang about and spy on them personally. If they crossed one's path, that was different, and then it was permissible, in this world of good manners, to rush after them and gaze awestruck from afar. I can remember a rather fast run up Tremont Street to see Miss Jose Collins, star of *The Merry Countess*, and so beautiful that she was *worth* a good run. And once again Fortune smiled upon me fairly when I saw a sign in Slattery and Company's show window announcing that Miss Violet Heming was within, selling Red Cross Christmas seals. By a hasty bit of furtive bookkeeping I managed to scrape up a quarter, and went in and bought some from her, for which she thanked me. I heard her, and my friend Katherine Follett heard her, too. Miss Violet Heming, leading lady for Mr. George Arliss, in *Disraeli*, had said 'Thank you' to Ruth Gordon Jones. So now there were three actresses with whom I had had something approaching personal contact — these two, and Miss Alice Claire Elliott.

After the receipt of Miss Olsson's letter joy reigned supreme, only slightly marred by a fly in the ointment in the person of my usually tractable mother, to whom this letter did not bring quite so much pleasure as it did to me. My mother was cautious, and also prone to horror stories that looked at life darkly and leaned to the seamy side: stories of how a darky had once chased her right out of a cemetery in Bainbridge, Georgia, and how on another occasion — this time, impartially enough, in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts — a diabolical foot-



pad had slashed her handbag containing Grandma's amethysts right off her wrist, with her own sister not two steps ahead. My mother's mind ran to the imaginative, and she was forever warning me not to speak to strangers, no matter how much I was tempted, and never, never to accept candy from them, for sometimes it was poisoned and always it was a trick. Also, women were worse than men! And now here, writing me a letter, was a woman, a stranger, and an actress as well. Gracious only knew what ulterior motives might be behind all this!

My mother said firmly that if I went to the Castle Square Theatre she must go too. She said that it was in the *worst* part of Boston. There were several districts which she used to describe this way, but on that day Castle Square took precedence. She said that girls could disappear and never be seen again, and added horrid implications about the South American Trade. She said that I might *think* that I was going through a door into Miss Olsson's dressing room, when all the time somebody wicked was very cleverly misdirecting me and with one shove I should end up a prisoner in some squalid cellar, later to be herded off to Rio, where Papa had been. She said that this happened every day, and when I asked her what she would do to save me if it *did* happen, she said that she could scream.

I must say that I had a very hard time with my mother, but after considerable badgering she finally weakened and agreed to see me safely through the door of Miss Olsson's dressing room, and then leave it to fate to get me home intact, by some shorter route than via Rio. This was not much of a concession, but it was the best that I could get. Go she would, and go she did, and perhaps it was all for the best, for even she had to admit that the stage entrance of the Castle Square Theatre seemed in every way as circumspect as our own back door.

All that I can now remember of the visit itself is my mother and I standing in a dark hallway, my heart thumping louder than the Last Trump. After a nervous knock, the door of Miss Olsson's dressing room opened into brightness, and those bright lights might just as well have been the first stop on my way to Rio, for all I knew what was going on. I didn't even know when my mother left me. I don't think I saw Miss Olsson *or* the dressing room, and so when I left there I was as ignorant of what backstage looked like as I had been when I came in. But somewhere through the haze my senses were restored long enough to hear Miss Olsson say that instead of my going off to dramatic school she would arrange an interview with Mr. John Craig, the Ruler over this domain, and perhaps I might get to play small parts there.

With that I wafted out, back to the South Station, and semiconsciously boarded the Wollaston train. Dreamily I ended up at our supper table, eating everyday meat and potatoes and wondering if perhaps Mr. Craig would want me at almost any minute. Possibly he might not even permit me to finish out the school week. How the news would rock Quincy! How sad my school would be to see me go! I should always remember to be kind to my classmates, even if I became as famous as I naturally intended to be.

All the other days of my life seemed to have slipped away from me, and I started newborn from that afternoon—newborn an adult, fully armed for the fray as though I had sprung straight from one of Cadmus's teeth. I thought of how recently I had been a child. Only that afternoon I had been scared because a man on Tremont Street had pinched me. The world, which seemed so uncertain only a few hours back, was now solved, settled, and simple, and, like Chicken Little, I was about to wander out and see Life!

(To be continued)

# ISOLATION: THE DODO

BY DAVID L. COHN

DEEP SNOW PLANTATION  
IVANHOE, MISSISSIPPI  
June 16, 1939

DEAR ELISAVETA ANDRIEVNA: —

Congratulations. You are fast becoming one of us. Soon you will be as American as a two-bagger or a cop bawling out a speeder. I like your definition of America at the moment: 'A large body of confusion facing two one-way oceans,' but your question upsets me. 'Who is Senator Borah?' It reminds me of the question asked by a girl of the Paris ballet in 1863 when Renan was at the height of his fame. 'Tell me,' inquired the little darling of a young man, 'who is this M. Renan that everyone is talking about? Is he a member of the Jockey Club?'

Senator Borah, my dear, is one of our Institutions now and has been for a long time. He is upright, honest, sincere, and — most interesting to you at this stage of your education — an isolationist. You can find all you need to know about the Senator in the library; I'll tell you the little I know about isolationism; then it will be your job to fit the garment to Mr. Borah's massive frame.

This country is full of professional simplifiers lay and political, but I'm not one of them. I warn you therefore that in talking about isolation we shall have to consider such apparently unrelated matters as Washington's Farewell Address in 1796 and President Roosevelt's purchase of Argentine corned beef in 1939; the tariff from Hamilton to Hoover; Hawaii from the landing of the

first American whalers in search of girls and fresh water to our final acquisition of the islands; our recognition a few years ago that Soviet Russia, whether we liked it or not, was a fact just as tuberculosis is a fact — to say nothing of our foreign loans and investments, sales of scrap iron to Japan, of Coca-Cola and chewing gum to France, and a thousand other things, great and small, that reflect the relations of the world's mightiest power with the world. But if brevity compels me to drop Hawaii, Hamilton, and Coca-Cola by the way-side I hope you'll forgive me.

As Mr. Roosevelt once remarked: 'First things first.' So let's look at Washington's Farewell Address where it all began. He said: 'Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote connection. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies which are essentially foreign to our concerns.'

This is all to the good as far as it goes, but it seems to me Washington did not go far enough. Suppose he had told his audience this: 'Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none, or a very remote connection. Frequently those interests come into conflict. Out of that conflict came our chance to become a free country. Now that we are free we must stay free. And we cannot stay free if we are drawn into the future quarrels of Europe.'

This would have been factually and historically accurate; would have placed America in perspective with the world;

and would have laid down a policy. But Washington said what he said, and he did not in my opinion lay down any policy, for in order to do so he would have had to say that the quarrels of Europe must not under *any* circumstances concern us. And he was too wise to say that.

But, whatever he said or did not say, two things are certain. The one is that no man can bind this country to follow any policy, domestic or foreign, forever; we amend the Constitution when we see fit. The other is that Washington naturally could not foresee the time when the United States would become so intimately a part of the world that Europe's quarrels would concern us, and the country so powerful that our policies would not only affect Europe but perhaps even bring about conditions that would cause European conflicts, or bring them to an end after they had started. Washington had not long been buried before the quarrels of Europe did concern us, and, of all places, in what was an immensely remote continent to the provincial, pioneering United States of the 1820's: South America. There we parted from our isolation, were the first nation to recognize the revolting states of the southern continent, and soon warned Europe under the Monroe Doctrine to keep its hands off these states.

Let's sum up before we go on. This is the genesis and early history of so-called isolationist America. (1) We secure our freedom because of the quarrels of Europe and the aid of the French in those quarrels. (2) As part of our struggle for freedom we enunciate the stupendous doctrines of the Rights of Man. These doctrines, falling on France with gigantic impact, are in part the motive forces of the French Revolution. (3) Out of this revolution come Napoleon and the Napoleonic Wars. We take advantage of Napoleon's troubles and buy the vast Louisiana Territory, but at the same time his struggles throw us into the War of 1812 against his great enemy

Britain. (4) Then the South American states, in a period of European wars and revolutions, rebel against Spain. We recognize their sovereignty and set up the Monroe Doctrine.

Thus two things were perfectly clear a century ago when America was a relatively weak country: (a) that we affect the world, and (b) that the world affects us. Certainly this is an inauspicious beginning for a country dedicated to isolationism.

Now let's go on. Comes the Civil War. Mr. Lincoln, fearful that England will aid the South, accepts the aid of Russia. Russia, jealous of the power of England, comes to Mr. Lincoln's aid and sends two squadrons of war vessels to the United States. One puts in at San Francisco; the other at New York.

Look at the paradox and confusion. Of all countries that hated the American system based on the Rights of Man, none could have hated it more than absolutist Russia, where even the most elementary rights of man were denied. And Mr. Lincoln, bent on freeing millions of black slaves, accepted the help of a country where even more millions of white slaves were held in the bondage of serfdom.

Now *you* tell *me* what this proves. My guess is that it proves that nations, like women, move according to the principles of earthy logic and necessity. For while a woman may flirt with handsome men while she is unmarried, when she settles down to the serious business of marrying she chooses one who will be useful. And nations abandon theories in the face of conditions. Witness Mr. Chamberlain's frantic desire to press in friendship the hand of Mr. Stalin, stained with the blood of the relatives of the English royal family.

In New York you can learn dancing, I'm told, in six easy lessons. Let's now observe the easy steps that we took to the mad music of a world at war.

(1) From 1865 to 1914 we were busy building America. From 1914 to 1919

we were busy getting rich. At the beginning of the war we were a debtor country to the extent of about \$3,000,000,000; at the war's end we were a creditor country to the tune of about \$14,000,000,000 — the most prodigious economic transformation ever seen in modern times.

(2) Did we then talk about isolation? We certainly did. But only *political* isolation. We would have none of the League of Nations. Not only did we say nothing of *economic* isolation, but on the contrary we announced that New York would usurp the ancient rôles of London and Amsterdam and become banker to the world. The fact that we were no more qualified to play the part than Bob Burns is qualified to sing the leading rôle in *Snergoutchka* didn't deter us at all. We had the money, and if money and wisdom aren't as inseparable as gravy and chicken backs at a boarding-house dinner, then we ought to repudiate Tom Paine and begin all over again. But that isn't all. Frequently we not only leap before we look but won't even look after we have leaped, because, in our mass-production and mass-thinking economy, vertebræ are interchangeable spare parts and a broken neck means nothing more than time out for quick roadside repairs. What I mean is this. We were so busy counting our billions we forgot that, in the modern interdependent and exquisitely sensitive world, you cannot keep politics and economics in separate watertight compartments. You cannot do it even in a single country. Is New Deal politics the result of economics, or is New Deal economics the result of politics?

(3) Now look at our position and our opportunity at the end of the World War. It was a position without parallel. In five years we had been transformed from a debtor into a creditor nation. We stood apart from the hatreds and conflicts of Europe. We asked neither territories, mandates, nor anything else. We enjoyed the good will of nearly all the

world. We were the largest consumers of raw materials on earth and the largest producers of raw and manufactured products. Poverty-stricken Europe bitterly needed us both as a customer to whom she could sell and as a source of supply from whom she could buy. Our trade with many countries might have been the difference between prosperity and depression; orderliness or revolution; nationalism or internationalism. With this unparalleled opportunity to be an effective agent in the future of the world for war or peace, and without committing ourselves starkly to political internationalism, what did we do? What was the balm that we prepared to heal the wounds of a war-torn world and thereby make for our own eventual peace and prosperity? I blush to tell you.

(4) It was to lend money; to set the draft horses of politics and economics pulling in opposite directions. Our big talk of 1919 was soon converted into action by the big economic collapse of 1920-1921. (A vigorous, impatient people, we believe that an action a day keeps problems away.) At home we had idle billions, idle men, idle farms, and idle factories. Abroad Europeans had stomachs but little food; backs but no shirts; factories but no machinery. Here was a luscious combination like strawberries and cream. We'll show the world, we said. And no sooner said than done. Immediately our bankers — some of them Skull and Bones, others Porcellian, but all of them as tweedy as any group of men in the City of London — tracked down the Argentines, the Greeks, the Rumanians, the Germans; anybody who was literate enough to sign his name on pretty bonds at 92 bearing 8 per cent interest. The money went into our banks; goods went out of the country; we had 'prosperity' again; and Uncle Sam's coattails fairly flew in the wind as Rosinante, with him aboard, scorched around the track.

(5) Then the economists began to croak, but nobody paid any attention to

them. Most of them had never earned as much as \$15,000 a year in their lives, and if they had any sense they'd have proved it by earning more than what was mere popcorn money in those days. But the economists croaked just the same, and their croakings, translated into American, were to the effect that you cannot lend money abroad and get back money; you can receive only goods and services. Some of the kill-joys even brought up the unpleasant fact that we had paid our debts to Europe not with gold but with goods. We, however, didn't want goods or services. We lent money, and money we'd have in return. This is a New Era, said the smart boys.

I must tell you that we have a new era every twenty minutes. With us it is not only a period of history, — if only a twenty-minute period, — but a period that may be used like an epithet, or an old shoe. If you don't like a man's theories, you shut him up by hurling a new era at him. So new eras flew through the money-choked air, the economists hid in Harvard Yard, the bankers lent more money, the people bought foreign bonds, and everybody was prosperous. Finally the time came when we were lending our customers new money with which to pay interest on old loans, and more money to buy more goods. Stocks, as they used to say, soared, and we were growing richer and richer. Those were the days when so many Americans were in Paris that it was worth a Frenchman's life to show his head in Montparnasse after dark; when everybody drank champagne on the morning boat-train from Cherbourg; and a woman who didn't have a dozen Vionnet gowns complained to Papa that she hadn't a stitch to put on her back.

(6) Then we, the richest and mightiest people on earth, began to be afraid of war-prostrate Europe. Afraid that she — and especially Germany — would flood us with cheap goods. The fact that every country in Europe desperately needed all the goods it could get for its popula-

tion and the restoration of its exhausted stocks did not convince us. Simultaneously with the lending of money, we passed higher tariff acts that would make the repayment of the money impossible in any form. Debtors could pay only with goods, and we saw to it that we could not take the goods. Already by 1921 Congress had enacted an emergency tariff, and in 1922 raised the rates still higher through the Fordney Act. But this was only a beginning.

(7) Soon two great events came at once. The first was President Hoover. He was no yokel like General Grant. He had been around; from West Branch, Iowa, to St. Petersburg, London, Peking, Paris, and way points east and west. He knew that *hotel de ville* was just a fancy way of saying city hall, and that the seat of the Greek Metropolitan is not Athens but Constantinople, even if it is in Turkey. Up to Mr. Hoover's day in the White House and during his stay there, we continued to lend money with never a thought of how we could get it back. The Germans used some of our cash to erect magnificent workers' apartment houses while our workers sat in stinking tenements; some of the South American countries spent part of the loans in celebrations for home-coming exiles while we had to dig down in our pockets for our own Mardi Gras in New Orleans; and the French ate our fat hams while we in the South lived on fat back. Evidently we were hell-bent on reversing the old adage to make it read 'Charity begins abroad.'

But finally, in 1928, we woke up with an awful headache, and, just as we had abruptly started lending, so just as abruptly we stopped lending. Then the lights of fairyland began to go out. The shadows of depression, beginning in Austria, lengthened across Europe and spread from country to country. In 1929 our blazing sun was darkened by the fast-moving eclipse. The catastrophic depression of our times had begun.

Imagine our surprise, therefore, —



and our rage in the cotton South, — when Mr. Hoover, who knew better, signed the Hawley-Smoot tariff act in 1930 raising rates to their highest point in our history and stripping us of the remaining remnants of our foreign trade. We had forgiven him for sitting on the fence in domestic affairs and for sitting on a log with Ramsay MacDonald in international affairs, but we shall never forgive him for sitting on us.

(8) In the larger aspect, however, we had achieved the dream of isolation: we were both politically and economically living on our own island apart from the world. We were not members of the League of Nations; we were no longer moneylenders; and the high tariff made us trade at home. The only trouble was that there was no trade. Country after country, incensed by our tariff rates, passed retaliatory tariffs; Canada, our greatest customer, in its rage practically forced Great Britain into the Ottawa Conference and Empire preference; and the farm products that we could not sell abroad were bought (at the nation's expense) by Mr. Hoover's farm board.

And what did Mr. Hoover say to all this? As President he had told an audience of Iowa farmers: 'We are part of the world, the disturbance of whose remotest populations affects our financial systems, our markets and the price of farm products.' Then he signed a tariff act that would make it impossible for us to be part of the world. But in 1933, when he had — shall we say? — retired as President, he wistfully meditated aloud on the subject of international trade at a Republican dinner in New York. The lovely maiden, Isolation, after we had flown into her unvaccinated arms, had given us a severe case of economic smallpox. This time the chastened but convalescent ex-President said: 'We cannot isolate ourselves. During the past two years the crash of one foreign country after another . . . has dominated the whole economic life of our country.'

(9) True enough, but what about the

effect of our policy on European countries? If the world affects us, we affect the world, but that is a subject on which we seldom speak. We get typhoid from Europeans, but we never give typhoid to them. What was the mentality of European countries at the time we were handing out loans with one hand and high tariffs with the other? It was a war mentality. They had just emerged from the most catastrophic war of all time and they feared another might begin at any moment. ('How long will the war last?' was the question put to General Bliss, U. S. A., in 1917. 'Fifty years,' he replied.) They knew that gold was essential to war and their safety. They needed our goods, but we demanded gold in return, and gold they would not give us; the national interests of nations take precedence over other considerations. Could we expect a war-racked and war-fearing continent to stand by and see all its gold drained off to the United States? And was it not true that our policy fed the fears of Europe for its gold? In any event, country after country abandoned the gold standard, depreciated its currency, and threw world trade into confusion. Our answer to all this was to pile confusion on confusion by more tariffs.

And more. Our policy played a part — if not a definitive part — in the rise of nationalism. For if (a) we are the largest market in the world and the largest source of materials, and if (b) that market is closed by tariffs and our goods can be had only for gold, when (c) other countries have little gold, it follows (d) that they will try to arrange their economies on a basis of self-containment. That is nationalism, and I need not tell you what nationalism has done already to the world and to us.

Furthermore: we had fought and won a war, but we did not comprehend the nature of peace in the modern world. For this is the axiom and the paradox and the futility of modern warfare between great powers: when you have vanquished your enemy, self-interest dictates that you

put him on his feet as quickly as possible. It may be that in so doing you help him to rise and fight you again; or, hopefully, that being again on his way to prosperity he will grow fat and peaceful. But, whatever the risks, the victor must help the vanquished. Why? Because you need the markets of the vanquished country and he needs yours. Nations, like small villages, live economically by taking in one another's washing, and they cannot live any other way unless they embark on the dangerous course of self-containment.

In all fairness it must be added that, if we were blind to the nature of peace, so were the British and the French.

(10) But to come back home. When Europe could not or would not pay us in gold, what did we do? We did not calmly sit down and reason the thing through and lower our tariffs so that we might recover something and help the world to recover. We simply got sore. We passed the Johnson Act which forbids the lending of money to any country whose debts are in default to us. Now this is, to my mind, an extraordinary act for two reasons. One is that we actually had to pass a law tying our hands so that we could not throw good money after bad. If a man owed you a debt which you assumed he could but would not pay, would you have to pass a private resolution to keep yourself from lending him more money, or would you merely decide to give him the cold shoulder instead of cold cash the next time he came around? But that is not our national way. We had to have a law. This act, however, has something to commend it. It falls into that category of strait-jacket instruments not uncommon here in which the rich husband of a weak-minded wife draws up his will in such a manner that she cannot lose control of his estate to a gigolo but may merely draw enough to live on. Congress, it seems to me, acted toward Congress in precisely that manner when it passed this act.

The other reason I think it is an ex-

traordinary piece of legislation is that it threw the burden of international lending back into the laps of London and Amsterdam, and such lending, we take it, is essential to the functioning of capitalism, and capitalism in turn is an essential component of democracy. But what if London and Amsterdam couldn't shoulder the burden alone? Well, we said, that is no business of ours.

Have we learned a lesson? We have not. Here is a headline in my newspaper: 'F. D. R. Navy Order to Buy Argentine Beef Stirs Storm.' The President placed an order for 48,000 pounds of Argentine corned beef for the navy, and immediately cattle-country Congressmen began to denounce the President, the Argentine, and the immoral polygamous tendencies of pampas bulls. The American cow, it seems, becomes a sacred cow when we try to buy a chunk of the other fellow's.

How nonsensical! The Argentine is the richest market, despite its small population, in South America. The Argentines are a sensitive people even if they are cow-raisers. And we have offended against their market by selling them more than we buy from them, and against their sensitivity by keeping their beef out of our market through the allegation that it is affected with hoof-and-mouth disease. Imagine what we'd say and think if the British publicly announced that they would not buy our automobiles because they always fold up like an accordion in rough places.

But when the President seeks to ease our strained relations with the Argentine, an important market and the pivotal country in South American politics, by buying some of its beef he is actually denounced for committing an 'un-American act.' That, my dear, is isolation. Under this theory it is cheaper to drive the Argentine into the arms of Italy and Germany, and spend hundreds of millions for battleships to keep the Italians and Germans out of South America, than it is to trade across the

counters to the benefit of the net economies of the two countries.

Now note the logic of our illogic. If the United States can get rich by isolation, why cannot a state, a county, a town, do the same thing? We are actually proceeding on this principle. The country is riddled with state taxes and prohibitions of commerce against other states that are in effect tariffs. Wisconsin, a dairy state, refuses to permit the entry of oleomargarine from cotton-oil states, and they in turn seek ways of keeping Wisconsin cheese from their doors. Such methods naturally tend to contract the existing market, and in an endeavor to escape the ever-constricting circle even more desperate methods are sought. Merchants all over the country put on trade-at-home campaigns, and for years there have been organized burnings in public squares of mail-order catalogues. It is amusing that mail-order investigators, attending these burnings, report that the local patriots bring to the fire not the current catalogue but last year's. All this in the name of isolation and prosperity.

But, viewed in the larger aspect, what does it mean? It means the repudiation of the Constitution and the theory upon which the Thirteen Colonies became the United States of America. If the colonies had remained — as was once contemplated — completely sovereign entities, they would have had the power to levy tariffs; customhouses would have stood at the borders of every state; business would have been hampered, and the entire economy disrupted. The founders therefore took this power away from the states, and as the result we have (or had) the largest free-trade area in the world. But now it is passing. If isolation is a sauce for the goose United States, then it is also sauce for the gander states.

Let's now pursue the theory of international economic isolation to its bitter end. What would happen in the world if to-morrow we should announce our retirement from the world's markets? We

are the largest buyers on earth of silk, rubber, tin, coffee, cocoa, and a long string of other commodities. Our failure to buy would send prices plummeting downward; the economies of many countries would crash; there would be revolutions or drastic transformations, and possibly wars. Or, in the realm of actuality, what happens when depression in America sharply curtails our purchases abroad? Since we are the largest buyers on earth, many countries are disastrously affected when we can't buy; they look to new outlets, with inevitably new political alignments; and wherever men live, from Tahiti to Turkey, the standard of living is lowered. Thus even our *domestic* affairs affect the world economically and politically, and because they do we too are affected economically and politically. Yet we talk of isolation as though the problem were one of isolating the microbe of the common cold.

Actually, of course, isolationism is feudalism, for it means and cannot mean anything except that which was of the essence of feudalism: localism. It means treating the wireless, the radio, the four-day transatlantic ship, and the airplane as though they did not exist. It means renouncing the superb instruments that men have made for bringing the ends of the earth together; abandoning far-flung commerce splendid in its possibilities of trading the ivory, apes, and peacocks of the East for the manufactures of the West, and subsisting instead upon the necessarily meagre resources of self-containment; giving up the broad life of the world for the narrow life of the village; and imprisoning once-free men within the walls that are prison walls however great the area they enclose.

And inevitably, in my opinion, it means bringing the centuries full circle. For just as capitalism was the death of feudalism and the genesis of democracy, so will a recrudescence of feudalism — I don't care what modern name you call it — mean the end of capitalism and of its concomitant democracy.

It might still be possible, by international pooling of colonial resources, diverting armaments expenditures to production goods, and breaking down trade barriers, to restore the world not to nineteenth-century economic internationalism but to a live-and-let-live world economy. My feeling, however, is that it is too late to go forward and we haven't got the steel nerve to go deliberately backward. We shall waver and wait and be pushed, I think, into the abyss. But a thinking man has the right and the duty to try to orient himself in the world; to know how he got where he is, and if possible to guess where he is going.

It remains to ask: Why are Americans so hell-bent for economic as well as political isolation? The two, I believe, are not dissociable. Is it because the other policy did not pan out? Or because it was not given a chance to pan out? Bread, we assume, is a good food. But I am told by my doctor that bread can make you ill just as well as green peaches, if you eat too much of it, if it is underdone, is soggy, or is not the right kind of bread for you. The eating of bread, therefore, if it is to be beneficial and not harmful, must be accompanied by the observance of certain laws that run with it. And the same is true of internationalism, political and economic. We not only did not observe the laws in this case, but we deliberately mocked and flouted them with catastrophic results.

Then, having broken the laws of internationalism, political and economic, and made a mess of things, we conclude that it is better to turn our backs on an ungrateful world that will not play the game according to our rules but only under the well-established rules of the past. And in our bitter disillusion — the product in part of our own illusions — we go back to George Washington and say that he was right and we were wrong. In quite the same way slaveholders in 1860 justified their position on the ground that Washington was a slaveholder:

therefore, what was good enough for the Father of the Country ought to be good enough for his descendants. In our times only Emily Post is iconoclast enough to attack Washington. He ate with his knife — good manners in his time, but, says Mrs. Post, bad manners for our times. Is it barely possible that the economics and international relations of a weak, remote, detached United States in 1796 are no longer suited to a powerful United States intimately connected with the world in 1939, and that just as it is now bad manners to eat with a knife it is bad practice to try to be in the world but not of it?

At this stage of the world's affairs perhaps these considerations are merely academic and parts of a dead past that will never live again. The fact is, however, that the country lives and will continue to live, and while it is easy cynicism to say that the lesson of history is that we do not learn from history, the forlorn hope persists that we will some day learn.

The other night I ran across a curious pamphlet which I wished might have been read by those who directed the policies of the country in the period 1919–1933, or at least one paragraph of it. And since it is an English pamphlet it might also have been taken to heart by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir John Simon. It is entitled *A Rough Draft of a New Model at Sea* by George Savile, first Marquess of Halifax, and was published in 1694. The author says: —

'A Nation is a great while before they can see, and generally they must feel first before their Sight is quite cleared. This maketh it so long before they can see their *Interest*, that for the most part it is too late for them to pursue it.'

Which awakens me to the fact that I must now go to see my *Interest*: a new mule called Heavy Duty that Galley, my foreman, tells me is the 'ploughingest mule in de Delta.'

Affectionately,

DAVID

# PARENTS AGAINST CHILDREN

BY KARL A. MENNINGER

## I

It is almost a commonplace to-day to say that the world is seething with hate. Even the pretense of good will has been cast aside, and men everywhere wearily acknowledge the unquenchable resentments which exist between races, countries, and even religious sects. It has become the literary and philosophical vogue to blame civilization for this state of affairs. Civilization is said to encourage hostilities and to force men into deadly rivalry by diminishing time, space, and mechanical difficulties; it furnishes them with weapons to kill each other and robs them of privacy, security, and freedom.

This doctrine is widely accepted. Yet, what a paradox! What a strange twist of irony that civilization, which made savages into men, should now make men into savages! Our civilization, our social structure, forged with what painful strivings and what godlike aspirations, in the hope of making man more than animal, of enabling him to live in communities in peace and coöperation, nurturing his children in safety and plenty, becomes in itself a threat to the individual, forcing him into hates he does not understand or wish to share. Strangest of all, the civilization which brought romance into being and exalted the unselfish emotion of love now seems to have aroused the resentments between the sexes to a higher pitch than ever before.

How is all this possible? How can we have forgotten in the course of a few thousand years what beneficent blessings

civilization was supposed to bring to mankind? Why is it taken for granted with such grim resignation that civilization proceeds toward hatred and misunderstanding?

It devolves upon us in answering such grave questions to investigate some of the origins of the emotion of hatred more minutely, especially those origins which are implicit in civilized life. For civilization is after all man-made, and if it has increased our woes it cannot be regarded as a dispensation of Providence which has mysteriously gone awry, but rather as a mishandling of human affairs caused by ignorance of and resistance to fundamental psychological laws.

In the face of such vast and universal phenomena as war, crime, and revolution, it is hard for us to believe that the origin of such things can be in the heart of the individual. For this reason the psychologist is like a voice crying in the wilderness. We find it difficult to accept the fact that the world is made up of many other people just like ourselves, who like ourselves were born, reared by mothers and fathers, teased and threatened by brothers and sisters and by the still more hostile playmates of the neighborhood and school. It is difficult to accept the psychological axiom that the behavior patterns of adults are determined by the experiences of childhood. We forget or discount the fact that Hitler had a mother, that Chamberlain had a childhood, that the President, the Senators, the editors, the political and social lead-



ers, had *their* disappointments and frustrations, misconceptions and obsessions.

After reading this article most readers, I am afraid, will heave a sigh of impatient incredulity and begin again to think of the tragedy in Spain, the shambles in Germany, the slaughter in China, in terms of high-sounding phrases about trade balances, racial antagonisms, geographical expansion, and political economy. I myself have a great interest in these sociological concepts, but I do not see any evidence that they are determined by intrinsic, natural, non-human laws. They are simply aspects of the behavior of people in groups, and this behavior is in the last analysis determined by the psychology of individuals. We have a right, therefore, to examine whether such behavior occurs according to certain patterns, and, if this be the case, we are bound to accept the empirical discoveries of psychology that such patterns are formed in childhood.

It was Freud's original idea that the child's greatest resentments arose from his jealousy in the family situation. Much as the father adores her, the little girl cannot but have some bitterness over the fact that he does not treat her as he does her mother. And similarly the warm affection that the little boy receives from his mother seems always to run into a hopelessly one-sided conflict with his father. In the Greek tragedies of *Edipus Rex* and *Electra* this jealousy was solved by murder. The hate that burns in the child's heart is, according to this concept, the hate of jealousy.

But evidence derived from the study of children seems to justify our ascribing the *birth* of hatred to occasions of earliest thwarting. Thwarting of certain needs of the child arouses rage. I say *certain* needs, because it is not true of all needs: the deprival of oxygen and calcium, for example, does not produce rage. But those needs associated with conscious satisfactions to the child and pertaining particularly to his physical comfort and his sense of security, physical and emo-

tional, are entirely supplied in the earliest weeks and months by individuals about him, who, therefore, become the agents of the thwarting when this occurs.

True, if we study the physiological mechanisms by which anger becomes manifest and the circumstances under which it may be aroused, we might come to the conclusion — as many have — that rage and the hatred which it expresses spring in the earliest observable instances from some deep self-protective purpose. This is the most benign, the most self-flattering, and until recently the most prevalent, view. Unfortunately, it does not entirely correspond to the known facts or satisfactorily explain the subsequent manifestations of the hostile impulses. It was the deductive genius of Freud that outlined for us in scientific terms the concept of an intrinsic malignancy within the organism, an instinct in the direction of destructiveness, which only to some extent serves the uses of self-preservation. This is the real and palpable 'original sin,' a potential danger to the individual and to his environment which it is the proper function of education — that is, civilization — to modify.

The fruitfulness of this point of view lies in the fact that according to the older theory the child is a *tabula rasa*, a lump of clay upon which are written merely the mistakes of the parents. The mistakes of the parents are important, as what I shall say hereinafter will demonstrate. But to understand most effectively the origins of hate, we do well to assume as a working hypothesis the validity of Freud's conception of an instinct of destruction, with which the 'mistakes of the parents' interact.

## II

None but the most romantic can hide from himself the fact that, however sweetly we may interpret it, the human child begins his life in anger. The painstaking observations by Margaret Blanton and others of the first minutes and

hours of infant behavior justify Kant's statement that the cry of the child just born has the tone, not of lamentation, but of aroused wrath.

One is easily persuaded by apologetic explanations for the baby's earliest rage. Rebecca West, for example, in an otherwise magnificent chapter<sup>1</sup> concedes that 'hatred necessarily precedes love in human experience.' But she assumes that this is 'an early error of the mind, which becomes a confirmed habit before reason can disperse it. . . . After the tideless peace of prenatal existence the child is born into a world of uncomfortable physical experiences and terrifying uncomprehended controls. It must feel that in order to preserve itself it must lay about it; it must beat with its hands and plot evil against the aggressors. Thus a habit is initiated; thus a fantasy is engendered. It is imagined that it is right to inflict pain, which is given the most intricate and noxious ramifications by early experience. When one inflicts pain on the surrounding world one is punished, one suffers a greater pain than one inflicted, one is treated as guilty. This does not rob pain of its majesty, for punishment is pain, and punishment is acclaimed as good and holy. Is it not a way of salvation to be punished?'

I think we can take no comfort from this assumption that the child's hate is only 'an error.' It would be a rather serious error if the child did *not* learn to hate certain things. The real point is that he does not learn it; he comes blessed or cursed with it, and then he learns to use it wisely or unwisely. Under proper tutelage, and with what we may call normal experience, he gradually becomes more and more able to distinguish between those objects which are properly to be feared, hated, and fought against, and those which may be more properly accepted, utilized, and loved.

Unfortunately, however, early in his life the child makes mistakes in his differentiations. He mistakes friends for

foes, and vice versa. The hot fire looks pretty and attractive, but it burns him. The cat looks soft and safe, but it scratches. The fierce, noisy person, who later turns out to be an older brother, is not nearly so dangerous as he at first appears, but is actually a protector. The new baby sister does not deplete the mother of all her capacity for love, as at first seemed to threaten. All sorts of such misunderstandings and wrong estimates must later be corrected by a continuous testing of reality which requires many years for the achieving of even a fair degree of accuracy.

I am conceding here that what might be called 'error' or ignorance or inexperience in the child plays a part in forming the early patterns of hate. For the present I am minimizing the contribution to these early reaction patterns of the ignorance and inexperience of the parents in dealing with this child. We shall come back to that in a moment. For there is yet to mention the effect of certain great 'natural' disasters, those unpredictable, unpreventable blows from the hands of Fate or Nature which all too early fall upon the heads of some children. Against these he has no defense but resentment. His mother dies, his home burns, his sister sickens, his father and mother separate, the country is visited by a famine. No adult can be quite objective in the face of such disasters, let alone an immature, inexperienced personality whose pattern of loving and hating is still in the process of formation. It is not surprising, therefore, that no one grows up entirely logical and sagacious in his program of emotional investment. At times everyone hates unwisely and loves unwisely, to some degree. Perhaps it would be clearer to say that we sometimes hate the wrong persons and love the wrong persons. When this confusion of loving and hating is excessive we call the individual neurotic.

I have already suggested how these confusions arise, but I have perhaps overemphasized their logical, rational

<sup>1</sup> *Living Philosophies*, Series II, No. 4.

aspects. Logic and reason imply some ability to see beyond the immediate present, and this, of course, the child cannot do. His earliest reactions are not rational; they are entirely instinctual, based upon the feelings induced by the immediate stimulus and the way it is followed up.

For, just as certain deprivals evoke the hostile capacities of the child, so certain gratifications allay them. If we can imagine a parent sufficiently skillful to replace each satisfaction of which the child is deprived by another satisfaction which the child could accept as approximately equivalent, without disloyalty to the requirements of reality, we should expect to see in the progeny of such a parent an ideal person, a man without any neurotic sense of thwarting in the adventures and misadventures of life, and hence a man not without hate but without hate for anything except those things which should be hated and fought against in defense of his own best interests.

But parents are only human beings; they too had childhoods, and they too had parents who made mistakes, and they too underwent accidents of fate which may always upset the otherwise ideal milieu.

Consequently what it comes to is that we should determine precisely what sort of thwarting and comforting gives rise to the childhood dissatisfactions which now seem to be so apparent in contemporary adults. In other words, if psychological principles are true, the hatred of to-day is ascribable in part to parental mismanagements of yesterday. But what were these mismanagements?

### III

Some readers will undoubtedly feel that psychoanalysts put too much emphasis on nursing and weaning and erotic sensations to the exclusion of many subsequent frustrations. Others will conclude that such principles apply

to a minority of individuals, and explain very little of the present world-wide epidemic of hatred. Surely, thinks the reader, not all those who clamor for war or gloat over the torture of those weaker than themselves are to be regarded as the children of exceptionally unhappy childhoods or of exceptionally unskillful weaning.

The fact remains that, both in the psychological study of young children and in the personality study of a large number of adults whose life adjustments have failed, there are certain striking and inescapable correlations of adult behavior with childhood traumata. One of these quite uniform findings is that the inability to endure frustration of the degree to which we are subjected in the ordinary experiences of daily life is regularly connected with the childhood experience of having been frustrated too considerably or too rapidly. These children are reared in such a way as to make them feel that they have been robbed or cheated.

Sometimes this is the literal truth of what happened, for many children *are* prematurely weaned and prematurely thwarted of many other infantile gratifications. More often, perhaps, it represents an insufficiently skillful or adequate substitution of other gratifications. The requirements of the new adjustment are too great. A child discovers it is pleasant to pour water on the floor; the technique of many parents is to forbid this gratification and substitute no other. The same could be said of toilet activities, manual manipulation of the genitals, thumb-sucking, and the like. Parents often look upon these things with a quite unjustified horror and do everything within their power to take such pleasures from the child without making any attempt to replace them with something more socially approved which is at the same time acceptable to the child.

In primitive society, where adults leave their children alone and do not thwart them, the child finds for himself substi-

tute gratifications which may subsequently appear to him better than the original ones of which he was deprived — not by his parents, but by impersonal forces. He comes to like guavas or bananas better than mother's milk, for example. He learns to 'come in out of the rain,' to step on grass rather than thistles. Thwarting, when it occurs, is entirely ascribable to nature, not his parents. (Most primitive mothers do not wean their babies; the children wean the mothers.) The resentments he feels must be charged up to those malignant forces of nature which it is the duty of mankind to combat.

In contemporary society, on the other hand, even while similar substitute gratifications are made, the process is considerably modified by the interferences of the parents. For not only does society demand that the child restrain his natural healthy impulses, curb many of his desires, and give up some of his greatest satisfactions, but it also demands that he express no untoward resentment at this frustration. He must not only sacrifice much of his freedom, but do so politely and winningly. He cannot even have the satisfaction of screaming, kicking, and fighting. 'Children should be seen and not heard' is an old-fashioned phrase, but the motive behind the saying, the idea that children must be kept in their place and not allowed to rebel, is still very important to many parents, as witness the letters they write to child-guidance experts asking how to 'make' the child obey, how to 'break' the child of bad temper.

When resentment is stimulated by thwarting, and then denied all outward expression, what we call suppression is gradually replaced by repression — that is, denial of the experience and then exclusion from consciousness. A repression is successful only if the child has attained sufficient maturity to accept it and to find outlets elsewhere. If it is forced upon him prematurely, it is almost certain to break down later in neuroses,

behavior disorders, cruelty, and the like.

I recall an instance of an otherwise kind and intelligent father who told with pride of slapping his three-year-old child's face every time the child said, 'I can't eat this oatmeal.' Since the child was almost as determined as the father, the slapping continued at intervals for ten or fifteen minutes at each meal. And how many parents have placed their children upon the toilet with instructions to remain there until they move their bowels, and how many have shown their senseless anxiety over the child's constipation by an onslaught of soapsticks, enemas, cathartics, and purges!

I mention these illustrations only to remind the reader of the contrast between the way the primitive child grows up and the way the so-called civilized child is obliged to grow. A significant commentary on this difference is contained in a communication I recently received from Dr. Nancy D. Campbell, executive medical officer of the United Pueblos Agency, Albuquerque, New Mexico. She says: 'One fact in the rearing of the Indian child has interested me greatly. Babies and small children are treated with great kindness and indulgence. If a child cries, it is suckled or provided with whatever it appears to desire, whether by our standards this would be good or bad. No disciplinary measures are offered unless restraint by use of a cradle board is considered in this light. During childhood they do very much as they please. I have often had the parents defer to a six-year-old's whims as to whether he would or would not be hospitalized, regardless of the child's degree of illness. Yet at adolescence that same child becomes a thoroughly law-abiding citizen who conforms in every respect to the tribal customs, takes part in the ritual ceremonies and dances, and defers in every matter of great or little importance to his elders.'

An anthropologist who has made a study of the Mohave Indians in Arizona



(Dr. George Devereux) confirms these observations so far as they concern the Mohaves. The Mohaves never strike their children or punish them in any way. One who did so would be regarded as 'crazy.' When asked why he did not respond to the blows administered to him by a child, one of the Indians said, 'Why should I strike him? I am big, he is small. He cannot hurt me. If I did so I should be like the white people who beat their children.'

True, civilization does require much more thwarting of immediate gratifications than does savage life, and although, in theory, it offers more compensations, these are probably not apparent to the child in the first years of his life. One might argue that the difficulty in bringing up children in our sophisticated modern life is that immediate physical goals are denied and abstract distant goals beyond the child's comprehension are offered him in what seems to him an entirely one-sided bargain. Some systems of education attempt to offset this by planting small rewards along the hard upward road of learning, scaling experiences and successes to the child's understanding in a model 'child's world' — the principle of many progressive schools.

This argument, however, while it contains much truth, overlooks the most important factor in learning. It ignores the immediate pleasure which the child obtains in the form of love whenever he gives up a socially disapproved habit or attitude. The encouraging smile of the mother when the baby remembers her prohibitions, the beaming pride of the parents in his efforts to use a spoon instead of his fingers — these are tangible rewards for which the child barter his naïve ideas of comfort and selfish ease. This is why society so wisely leaves the tremendous task of the child's first four or five years of education almost exclusively to parents, the persons who can best give this love and attention. Never again in his entire life will the child learn so much with such rapidity as he does in

these first years. From then on, no matter how brilliant he may appear to be, he is a dull and stodgy person in comparison to the triumphant flowering of his babyhood.

But without love to sweeten each step in this prodigious uphill climb, the boundless energy and curiosity of the little child are diverted into other paths. The great frustration which the modern child in civilized society suffers is not entirely due to the rigid curbing of his natural pleasures and unsocial habits; it derives also from the fact that he is deprived of the extra portion of love which his sacrifices require. When the restrictions are accompanied by expressions of the parents' hostility toward him, reinforced by their resentment of his intrusion upon their comfort, it is small wonder that the child reacts with bitterness.

Parents often treat their child as they were treated by their own parents, many years previously, thus achieving a long-deferred and displaced revenge for the indignities and suffering they endured. But, queerly enough, such parents rarely recognize the hate implicit in their behavior. They defend their position with the most respectable rationalizations: 'What was good enough for me is good enough for my child.' 'They knew how to bring children up in those days. The old folks were pretty hard on me, but it didn't hurt me any.' 'One thing I can say for my parents, they didn't spoil me.' So they say; and while they claim to be teaching their children to obey, to control themselves, to endure hardship and criticism without flinching, they are actually teaching that might makes right. The child learns quickly enough that his parents do what he is forbidden to do, and that such hypocrisy is permitted because of their superior power and strength. His object in life, therefore, becomes that of attaining adulthood in order to punish those who are weaker than he; and the revenge of the man upon the child is perpetuated for another generation. Some few children give up



the idea of attaining manhood altogether under these discouragements, and become irresponsible weaklings.

We should be quick to add at this point that not all the unwise restrictions and mistakes of the parents in rearing their children are to be charged to hostility, conscious or unconscious. Some of these mistakes are certainly due to ignorance and still others to a faithful adherence to the advice of false prophets. Much harm has been done, in my opinion, to the children of the present generation by the dogmatic, opinionated instructions delivered to young mothers by faddists of one kind and another, sometimes in very respectable garb. The fad of beating the child into submission was succeeded by the fad of ignoring the child's emotional needs completely; the fad of purging the child was succeeded by the enema fad and the dietary ritual. The disciplinarian doctrine competed with the *laissez faire* doctrine. The authority for the various regimens in which the parents were instructed, and which were then more or less consistently inflicted upon the child, was sometimes a psychologist, sometimes a physician, and sometimes, I am sorry to say, a psychiatrist. More often, I believe, it was a grandparent or a neighbor; but, having mentioned grandparents unfavorably, I must add that sometimes it is they who exert the most favorable and normative influence upon the process.

And yet, while we must make these allowances for the false instructions which mothers get in regard to the rearing of children, we must remember that not infrequently the willingness to accept such principles is dictated by an inner unrecognized hostility for the child which only needs the backing of some authority to put it into action.

One form which this hostility may take is that of overindulgence, the 'spoiling' which annoys so many observers, and which they frequently attribute to the recommendations of psychiatrists. Swamping children with 'advantages' is

often a substitute for giving the child time, interest, companionship, and love; these material gifts are frequently made to the child out of a sense of guilt for the unconscious hostility and lack of love felt toward him, and hence, as is always the case, they actually accomplish in the long run the hostile purpose which was their original incentive. The same is true of the mother who 'lives only for her child,' who is uncomfortable when she is away from him if only for a few minutes, who accompanies him to school, helps him with his studies, and allows him no friends for fear that they will contaminate him.

How these children feel about it years later (if their visit to the psychiatrist is postponed that long) is vividly portrayed by many patients. One son said of his mother:—

She brought me into the world, but I don't know whether it was because she wanted to have one human being that she could see successful in the eyes of the world and get pleasure out of it, or whether it was to make me happy. She lost the others and had me out of the whole damned batch to fill the place she had dreamed for this child. In these horrible sessions, she would tell of the dreams she had cherished when she felt me inside her. I had to listen to that. . . .

Every night she expected me at her bedside to kiss her. Every damned night! And yet I was so dominated that although I would threaten not to come into her room and she would say 'all right,' nevertheless, whether I was drunk or sober I would be there. I cannot break away from it, and each time I went I would not know whether she would fly up like a maniac at me or sob or have something to laugh about. That kills me. That's where that insecurity laid his hand on me. But I remember her. Why, if she had had a cat-o'-nine-tails, it would have suited her just fine. She might as well have had it. She wouldn't have worn herself out so much. She would whip me until she was exhausted, and it would be over the damndest trivial thing. Maybe she thinks that is why I have such a keen sense of honor [tears], and I do have it, but what good does it do me? No wonder I drink!

This case, while extreme, shows the excessive sentimentality by which the child frequently feels fettered, except that the hidden aggressiveness of the parent's attitude is more plainly revealed in this instance by the outbursts of rage which accompanied the demanding affection.

Whenever we speak about the hostility of parents toward their children we are met by vigorous defenses, often from the very persons who are most guilty. 'Why, I love my children devotedly,' exclaims the mother who is most obviously behaving in a way likely to harm them or which has already ruined them beyond redemption. President Neilson of Smith College recently brought showers of abuse upon his head by making the intelligent observation that much which passes for mother love is really self-love.

It is natural that we recoil from observing our own aggressions. To admit them is often to bring our guilt feelings into such an acute stage of awareness as to provoke severe anxiety. Some parents present a pitiful picture as they reproach themselves (usually on the wrong scores) for their earlier treatment of a child who has become maladjusted or mentally ill.

On the day I write this I have just talked with a mother whose boundless but unrecognized hate for her son drove him into a state of hopeless mental illness. He has been confined in a hospital for a dozen years, and will remain there all of his life. The mother told me proudly that she visited him regularly every month, in spite of the disapproval of the hospital physicians. 'I know he is glad to see me,' she said, 'and I think it does him good. Of course he never speaks. But I know he loves me.' Such a tragedy wrings one's heart, and perhaps now, for her, it is just as well that she cannot realize the part she played in her son's retreat from life. But there are other mothers and sons for whom it is not too late.

## IV

We know that most children are reared by women. The early frustrations which we have been discussing, as well as the earliest gratifications of the child, come to him most often at the hands of a woman. Not only this, but the subsequent training throughout the formative years of childhood until adolescence, and sometimes even then, is in the hands of women. It is therefore a presumptive conclusion that the patterns of emotional behavior of both loving and hating in men and women are to a far larger extent than any of us realize determined, not by 'the parents,' but by the *mother*. The child is born of her, and his first interpersonal experiences are with her; she is his first and greatest source of pleasure and love and food; but since every mother transfers her child from the comfort of her own womb and her own breast to the relative discomfort of a realistic world, one could postulate that she is also the one who first stirs up bitterness and revenge wishes in the child.

For this reason I feel that a careful study of the particular effects of civilization upon women and the way in which it deprives them of instinctual gratifications is of reciprocal importance in the understanding of why we grow up so much more prone to hate than to love. In a previous article in the *Atlantic*<sup>2</sup> I indicated some of the ways in which women are increasingly frustrated and cheated in their adult life. They have good and abundant reason I believe, for the resentments they feel, consciously and unconsciously. Herein lies the vicious circle. The women who must rear the children are themselves so thwarted and resentful that they tend to impose the same restrictions upon their children. The children grow up and reenact the same error; males frustrate females, and females divide their aggressions between their male partners and their dependent children.

<sup>2</sup> 'Men, Women, and Hate,' February 1939.

This sounds as if we were making woman the centre of human society. And, in the sense that it is she who moulds the early patterns of behavior of each individual unit of the coming generation, the mother is the centre of human society. The fact that we do not recognize her as such is one of the ways in which we frustrate her most. The tendency is rather to demote woman, to patronize her, and to deprive her of recognition of her biological superiority by polite condescension. Muscles and brains are still considered more important in our culture than love and endurance. This, scientifically, is a fallacy.

To be sure, women themselves fall into this way of thinking. It is very difficult for a woman to think about women; she is too wise to have any confidence in generalities. If she must think about women, she adopts masculine attitudes and joins in the general trend of the prevalent mores. By doing this she hides from herself the essential self-destructiveness of such a departure from her biological birthright, and she hides from herself also the way in which she continues the vicious circle of frustration.

This may sound to some as if I were heaping a great deal of blame upon women for the present state of affairs, and making mothers the 'precipitating cause' of all the present woes of the world. This is not my idea. It is philosophically naïve to talk about causes, first or last, because everything is related to, and in that sense *causes*, everything else. It is not a question of cause or blame, but a matter of describing as accurately as we can what is happening and then, if we wish it to be ameliorated, attempting to break the vicious circle with the aid of our intelligence. If mothers are unduly restrictive toward their children, it is not through some original sin or some inherent viciousness, but because of some unfortunate experiences of their own for which civilization

has not enabled them to be compensated satisfactorily.

Nor should this seem to be a great whitewashing of all fathers, because, as I have elsewhere indicated, the preoccupation of men with their business and with each other has acted as a disappointment and deprivation to women and fanned the flames of their discontent. In this way, men are certainly responsible for some of the unnecessary embitterments which are stimulated in children. In a more direct way, however, the way in which the average person would think of it, I think men are less closely related to the problem because they are less important to the child.

Critical readers will want to remind me of innumerable examples of the harsh father — the father who beats his children, the father who scorns or ignores them, the father who deserts them, the father who forces them into celibacy, hard work, martyrdom, or flight. Surely such fathers excite hatred, and in such instances it may seem unfair to incriminate the mother.

The answer to this will probably tax the credulity of the reader, but I must state it as an empirical fact that even in such instances as those I have just mentioned, while the father gives plenty of occasion for the conscious hatred of the child, it is often the mother who aroused this resentment in the first place. Perhaps it would be better to say that it is the mother toward whom the deepest layer of resentment attaches itself. Logically or illogically, correctly or incorrectly, such a child in the secret places of his heart often feels that his mother should have protected him from such harshness, or else that it is the mother who in some way exposed him to such mistreatment. Of course, *consciously* the resentment is entirely displaced, as we say, on to its more conspicuous provocator, the father. His harshness makes such a displacement the easier. The child's feelings can then be justified to himself more convincingly. But if we

penetrate the many layers of hatred we come eventually to the deepest hurt of all — 'Mother failed me.'

I remember a conscientious school-teacher who had led a very hard life. She had never permitted herself any pleasure except that of intellectual application and devotion to her work. She had been reared by pioneer parents, a kind, hard-working mother and a stern, harsh father. 'I remember,' she said, 'many times being struck in the face by his fist and knocked to the ground for such an offense as dropping a teacup.' And yet, as it developed, it was not the father — much as she consciously hated him — against whom this woman harbored her inmost feelings of injury. It was against her mother. Her rationalization was that her mother should have protected her and her sisters from such cruelty. I say 'rationalization' because under this justification were hidden more infantile grievances, not the least of which was that she had been the oldest child and had been forced, while still a baby herself, to make way for younger children and to share her mother with them.

Another instance was the weak son of a very strong, self-made German-American father. The father was proud of his older son but extremely disappointed in this younger one, and punished him severely for his poor schoolwork. He was sent to a succession of boarding and military schools, where he was lonely and frequently mistreated. When he begged to be allowed to come home, his father refused, calling him a 'nitwit' and a 'mollycoddle' and comparing him unfavorably with his older brother. In spite of this, the boy's misery at school was so great that he finally ran away and refused to return to school. At home the father showed his contempt and dislike for the boy continually; his mother, on the other hand, was a quiet, tender-hearted woman who indulged and comforted her son in every way she could, although remaining loyal to her husband.

Yet, curiously enough, it was not the father against whom this boy's bitterest hostility was felt, nor yet the older brother. He thought his mother, in some mysterious way which he could not explain, should have 'explained things' to him, helped him to get along, or saved him all his friction with his father.

In both these cases (as always) the mother was the first and most important link with the world. She was the first antagonist in the child's battle to get his own way, and these apparently unreasonable and unfair accusations the child brought against her in later years therefore had a peculiar kind of validity in that they were representations of a conflict in which the child felt worsted.

## V

If the early conflict between mother and child is not too severe and the child is not too bitterly thwarted, we may expect him to reorient himself to women as he grows older and no longer to consider them as exclusively agents of nourishment or policemen to curb his pleasures. But the opportunity to do so is considerably lessened by the fact that the child's care and education are entrusted almost entirely to women, who quite often reënforce and strengthen his idea that women exist to frustrate him. I say 'strengthen' because when the child is turned over to a substitute mother at an early age it often increases his burden of hate without expanding his capacity for love.

The tendency toward the use of substitute mothers is quite understandable in the light of the widespread change in vocational interest of late years. From being the principal gratification of their mother, children have come to be one of the chief obstacles to her achievement of personal success in masculine or worldly terms. With this lessening degree of personal contentment in modern women, and the social and economic as well as



psychological disadvantages of bringing children into the world under existing conditions, it is logical to expect that those who are charged with the responsibility of children would bring to their task more resentment and derive from it less satisfaction and glory than formerly. Children are aware of this attitude in their elders. A little boy of four who had never had reason to think of himself as unwanted went with his parents to find an apartment. After they had been turned away from many houses because 'we don't take children,' he somewhat sadly suggested to his father and mother that they leave him in the car when they interviewed the next manager, so that they would have a chance to rent a home. Contrast this state of affairs with a child of the past generation who, born on a large farm, was not only accepted with tolerance, but welcomed as an addition to the farm force.

Until recent years only the very rich could entrust entirely to maids the duties ordinarily performed by the mother, but, since the turn of the century, woman's entrance into the economic world has extended the custom to families of even moderate means. Ostensibly such help is for the purpose of relieving the mother of the menial tasks associated with the care of the children, but in reality such maids or 'nurses' or governesses are frequently assigned to all the major responsibilities of the child's care. Not the least important of these, from the psychological standpoint, are such matters as toilet training and eating habits.

Of course it is conceivable, and no doubt frequently true, that these hired women may be more objective, stable, and loving than the mothers themselves. But they certainly do not have the same incentives to give the child love or to exert their utmost skill in managing the difficult transition stages from uncontrolled instinctual life to life according to civilized standards. Frequently they are extremely neurotic; not infrequently

they are feeble-minded. If parents who were disinclined to care for their own children were as seriously concerned with getting the best substitute parents as they are with the question of getting the best beauty-parlor operator or the best possible dressmaker or the most competent dentist, it might be that they would really do their children a favor by putting them in more skillful hands. But this isn't what happens.

At any rate, for better or for worse, these substitute mothers are almost always women, and the necessity of thwarting and control, the slightest mismanagement of which the child resents, is again relegated to a woman. Any way one looks at it, the earliest struggles and hence the patterns of subsequent hostilities are developed by the child's earliest experience with women, and are accordingly with the greatest facility displaced in later life to other women.

And this generally goes on throughout the entire school system; the child's intellectual growth, edification, and inspiration are (in the United States) relegated almost entirely to women. I am tempted to digress at this point and describe the type of woman most communities select as the inspiration and guide of their children's mental and emotional development, and the barriers most communities erect against obtaining a normal and superior woman for this task. But this would lead us away from the subject. The point is that because women are cheaper than men, and perhaps because they are more patient and more diffident, society has pressed them into this job almost exclusively. And once again it is *women* to whom the child must learn to adjust himself, women whom he must try to please, women from whom he must learn to accept authority.

But now I must raise another psychological question. What, to a child, is a *woman*? How, in the unconscious, is woman identified as such? We speak of men and women, male and female, so



glibly that we forget that the psychological differentiation between them is difficult to make. The anatomical differences are obvious enough — to an adult. And they are known, although usually not clearly understood, by young children. But long before these anatomical differences are perceived, differences in dress, manner, tone and pitch of voice, and similar secondary characteristics must be much better known. In other words, to the very young child secondary sex characteristics are much more important than what we later call primary (anatomical) sex characteristics. It is a clinical fact that many children believe, occasionally even until adolescence, that their mothers are anatomically similar to their fathers. And yet there is no doubt in these children's minds as to the existence of women as distinct from men. We do not know at what age children actually realize that only women have breasts; they learn very early that only women *offer them* the breast, but this period of life merges gradually into the period when these women offer them the bottle and then the oatmeal and then the beefsteak and potatoes, which their fathers do also.

Little is known about the child's earliest conception of femaleness as contrasted with maleness. All we can say is that it must be very inaccurate, but very definite. It must certainly consist, in each instance, in the peculiar personal attributes of the particular mother of a given child, and that mother in contrast to her husband and other members of that family, male and female. How soon the child can think in terms of genus instead of only in terms of species, we do not know. Let us suppose a girl baby is born into a family of a father, mother, a brother and a sister. It is presumptive that at first the world, as far as she is concerned, consists only of the person she later learns to call mother. A little later she is able to distinguish somewhat similar objects — human beings — but probably classifies them in distinction to

her mother as 'the non-motherly ones.' If she knew the words that we use, she would think of her mother as female and all others as something different — that is, male, or at least non-female. They certainly do not treat her as the mother does. It must be considerably later that she learns that her sister belongs in the same genus as her mother, and we know definitely that it is much later that she is able to accept the fact that she, too, belongs in this genus.

One of her early differentiations must be that some people are feeders and others are competitors or rivals for the position of being fed. As she develops intellectually and emotionally she can revise these estimates and perhaps even differentiate between those who feed directly like mothers and those who feed indirectly like fathers. But certainly she sees that the function of some of those about her is primarily that of giving and of others primarily that of taking, and with the latter she comes into rivalry. This would seem like a very elementary classification, but it might be contended that in the long run it is a more valid and even more useful one than the sophisticated classification that we adults use — namely, 'male' and 'female.'

However that may be, it is safe to conclude that the child's conception of femininity must be largely determined by early impressions of his mother, impressions which are subsequently reinforced by experiences with substitute mothers, gradually corrected to some extent by widened horizons and prolonged contact with reality. The process of modifying such early impressions never changes them radically, however. As William James said, even the most violent revolutions of thought leave most of the old order standing.

We have admitted, also, that the 'old order' of the personality, the early structure which is determined so largely by interpersonal relationships with the mother, contains — in our culture — too many bricks of hate. As one reads the

pages of history it is possible to convince oneself for a moment that things are improving: we no longer use ordeals; we no longer sell slaves; we no longer beat women; we no longer burn witches — or do we? I am afraid we do — all these, and worse. Concentration camps, torture, and starvation in Europe; barbarism and slaughter in Asia; chain gangs, lynchings, and the extinction of wild life in America; an increase everywhere in suicide, in neurosis, in alcoholism, in unemployment, in war. There is no use to multiply instances; the behavior of individuals indicates that there is something seriously wrong in the world. The fact is all too plain that if the manifestations of hate are not actually increasing, at least they grow no less. And if one considers the peaceful life of the primitive peoples of the South Sea Islands prior to the advent of white culture, one can find little pleasure in contemplating the compensatory comforts of electricity, the automobile, and the radio.

In our investigation of the origins of the malignant hate that seems to be at the root of our civilization's sickness, we are led back inevitably to the ways in which it arises and is stimulated in the formative years of childhood; for economic and governmental evils — all the bogies of the modern world — are man-made and hence products of strong psychological drives working in individuals. If we look at the personality scientifically we must cease to think of ourselves as the victims of circumstances. By recognition of our weaknesses, by realization of our strengths, we can to a considerable degree so modify our reactions to the environment that the environment modifies its reactions to us. This, in turn, makes everything easier — easier for us, easier for those about us, easier for the next generation. Begun early enough, such a program should

reduce some of the excitations of hate in its earliest inceptions — in the heart of the child. For if hate arises instinctively within us, so does love, and if one can be stimulated, so can the other. More than that, we know that both hate and love can be controlled, to some extent. Unfortunately, love is more apt to be controlled than hate. Any program which our intelligence and science can devise for the mitigation of hate in the world must look to the cultivation of love as its central theme. For, to turn the whole problem around, we may say that lack of love is the source of all our difficulties in controlling hate in the world.

If I have seemed to involve women as the more responsible agents in this program, it is because they have two great advantages in prosecuting it: Nature has given them the opportunity of being the child's first and greatest object of love, the pattern for all his subsequent strivings and defeats; temperament has made them the exponents of peace and loving-kindness in the world. If the task seems an overwhelmingly difficult one, we must consider the possibilities of so altering our social structure that women (and therefore children) are not so much thwarted and exploited as at present.

It is not impossible to conceive of a day when the expression of love will be as natural and as spontaneous as is the expression of rage and hostility now. But before that day arrives the study of the child and his proper nurture and training must come to be recognized, not as a pretty little hobby for a few earnest zealots and pedants, but as a task equal in importance to the study of armaments and the compounding of poisonous gases. Someone of great faith might go further and dream of a time when we shall have the wisdom to spend as much on the cultivation of love as we do now on the preparation for war.

## CHARLIE CHAPLIN

BY ALISTAIR COOKE

### I

A GENERATION has come and gone since Charlot, Carlos, Carlitos, and Charlie became the most famous actor in the world. But Charlie Chaplin at fifty is essentially and physically the same dapper midget who first made the movies come to life for the western world. In the interim he has figured in some notable personal feuds and has been linked to intellectual movements he cared little about. He was the first motion-picture millionaire. He has announced before each of his last two films that he was about to retire. But he has not yielded the crown he was the first to hold — as Will Rogers put it, 'the Zulus know Chaplin better than Arkansas knows Garbo.'

More than talent contributed to Chaplin's fame. He has had the luck, as well as the shrewd business sense, to play only one character. That character wore the same baggy pants, the same black hair and knotted suspenders, in a 1914 skating rink as it did on a 1936 assembly line. In the intervals between a score of pictures, the same cracked boots have been preserved in ether. Chaplin's creation is a clown, and like that of all clowns his make-up is ageless. It is also a careful composite of styles familiar to Americans and Europeans but in line with no fashion and no era. In appearance he might have been a London insurance clerk around 1910. In England the character gains in reality what it loses in satire, for in England a derby hat is common and inconspicuous headgear,

indicating no social rank other than that of one who works in an office six days a week. In other countries, in France and the United States especially, the derby and the cane, being vague symbols of elegance, give a satirical edge to a portrait that means to typify the world's breadwinners. In any country the character is a tramp, a vagabond, a bum, a man who in England is always being wakened by farmers under hedges, in France is being jailed in small towns for failing to show his papers, in America is chased for riding the rods.

Psychologically, the character is a masterpiece. For the genteel clothes give a social sanction to rebellion, and conversely the respectable middle-class man is pictured as an independent spirit contemptuous of security, able to snap his fingers at big shots, tedious routine, and a cottage for two. Add a strain of gallantry, an instant bravery to defend everything that is feminine, everything also that is poor and slighted — and the world's heart begins to bulge for this archetype of its own good intentions. The final detail is that pathos which critics have been so troubled to analyze. Quite possibly it is due to Chaplin's lack of inches as much as to anything else. For a gesture of bravery which would appear perfunctory in Robert Taylor is brave and tragic in anybody just over five feet.

This character is no more like its creator than Disney's mouse. In a Pasadena theatre a year or two ago, I over-

heard a young man say, 'Look, there's Charlie Chaplin,' as he nudged his girl. She turned round quickly, then whispered back, 'You're crazy; it doesn't look anything like him.' And as they walked away, the young man added irritably, 'Well, you can't expect anybody to go around *looking* like Charlie Chaplin.'

This is an obvious answer, but it occurs only as an afterthought. And so far Chaplin's fame has depended on the fact that the afterthought rarely occurs. This year, however, may doom him to a sudden obscurity or may revive the old post-war idolatry. For at fifty the man behind the moustache proposes to play a new part and so to take for the first time the common risk of actors. He has started shooting *The Great Dictator*, in which he will play the serious lead as a *Führer* bearing the unmysterious name of Hinkel. For the joy of counterpoint (also possibly as a sort of reputation insurance) he will play the timeless clown with the cane and baggy pants, getting constantly arrested and humiliated for his close resemblance to the *Führer*. Behind that comic-strip eternity, the creator has grown through many phases of a personality as compelling and contradictory as any in the history of make-believe.

## II

Nearly everybody who has met Charlie Chaplin seems to recall the moment vividly by the physical shock of taking his hand. You expect a small man to have a small hand; but it is not until you have doubted for a moment whether it was flesh you held or some ivory knickknack that you look at its grinning owner and say, to yourself, he certainly is a tiny man. His feet are in scale, peeking out like mice from under high-held trousers. He is a little over five feet high, and his hair is piled like a melting snowball on a monumental, you might almost say huge, head. His hair has been graying since his mid-

twenties, and according to Henry Bergmann, his oldest actor friend and adviser (who has been in every film Chaplin himself has made), it turned white in a day and a night in 1928 when a crisis in the day's shooting of *The Circus* coincided with the breakup of Chaplin's second marriage. However that may be, it is white and thick now.

He is neat without being prim and moves with noticeable economy, more like a gymnast than an actor. Like a gymnast, he hops through a daily game of tennis which has given Fred Perry a reasonable workout. With this daily tennis nothing and nobody must interfere. Chaplin possesses excellent health, but is anxious about it all the time, and he has a gymnast's sensitiveness to minor ailments.

When he is enjoying himself, which is mostly in his own home, he walks continuously around and between the furniture, flinging up his hands, throwing back his head in a mocking gesture, talking volubly, speculating about the President's gold policy — whatever the cause, expressing dejection, expectancy, pathos, delight, and scorn. After several hours of this grueling tension, he will practically disappear into a big chair and begin to sip pints of cold water. In such breathing spells you can get a good look at the original face which few motion-picture fans can imagine without its surmounting mop of black ringlets, its square moustache, and its doughy complexion.

He has a well-modeled tanned face with small ears set almost flat against a stiff brush of hair, a small straight nose, the long convex clapper which is what most comedians seem to have for an upper lip, and a very firm, balancing chin. It is a large head, its bone structure massive for the body it rests on, but there is nothing heavy about the features. As in most mobile faces, the activity is all in the eyes and mouth. He has light gray eyes and a mouth that can do anything. In acting out some grim anecdote, he will freeze his eyes and

look like a death mask. A second later the eyes are almonds, the mouth a curling semicircle, and he is Pan. Or he blinks warily, tugs nervously at his wrist inclines his head at an angle, licks an uncertain upper lip, and is a melancholy sketch of the Duke of Windsor. On his feet again, he will mimic any and all the people he has met and remembered; it may be a Japanese Cabinet Minister or Ramsay MacDonald, an inspired drunk, Roosevelt, or a current film star. Or he takes up a position with his arms outspread, waiting to receive a cape, slumps his firm shoulders, breathes heavily, and is suddenly the patrician buffalo which was Edward VII — whom he once saw in a newsreel and marveled at.

### III

The month of April, 1889, was not a fateful one for Europe. For news there was speculation about the recent suicide of Prince Rudolf of Austria. The echo of that dreary affair across the Channel drifted into the London music halls, where baritones stressed the beauty of mother love. One of these had more right than most to grow sentimental. On the fifteenth of April his wife Hannah, a handsome half-French gypsy, was in labor in a back room of an East End theatrical boardinghouse. On the morning of the sixteenth she gave birth to Charles Spencer Chaplin. Four nights later, six hundred miles southeast as the stork flies, an Austrian peasant girl was safely delivered of Adolf Hitler.

Chaplin's father made the circuit of music halls between Glasgow, London, and Paris. He was, one gathers, a well-meaning, irresponsible man. Chaplin rarely talks about his childhood because he recalls it only as a routine of heart-breaking poverty. But to get any notion of him you have to know a little about it, for it has urged him into much of his fantasy and is the source of whatever sense of fact his pathetic comedy springs from. His mother had the spirit but

not the health to work for the more abundant life. Naturally her son has not yet forgiven London for being the town in which she died in wretchedness of mind and body in the poorhouse.

For the first twenty years of Chaplin's life he was as poor as it is possible to be. He was schooled wherever the itinerant singer could get a job. He went at various times to the public — that is, the elementary and board — schools of London and the Midlands and Manchester. There is still no word which carries a more enviable echo to him than the word 'education.' Till he was old enough to know it, he took his poverty cheerfully, as small children will. He had a normal curiosity and an abnormal gift of daydreaming. He pictured himself accurately in every stage of a career as a great artist, or an emperor, or somebody that thousands cheered. When he got to working with grown-up men, he jumped at the chance to live out some of these fantasies. At the age of fourteen he took a job with a printing press, and into the gaslit workroom filled with shambling men in shirt sleeves and shiny pants he came wearing a secondhand morning coat and a wavy black bow tie. He can still remember the merciless Cockneys stopping the presses and shouting for joy, 'Morning, my lord! He thinks he's a regular toff, and no mistyke.' At such moments he learned a gambit he has not forgotten how to use. He was too proud to show his humiliation: he kept the workmen laughing by strutting out in pantomime the character he thought himself to be.

When his father was in a job and playing some provincial town, young Chaplin used to stand in the wings, and from there he got a pretty intimate idea of what heaven might be like. He left the printing press and hung around backstage, learning to tumble, soon picking up the patter, the songs, the cordial gags of the music-hall clowns and hoofers of that time. He was personable and a ready learner. One of his first parts was



with Lyn Harding, as Billy, the page boy, in a Sherlock Holmes play. Later he was in vaudeville with a team of dancing comics known as the Lancashire Lads. His mother dead, and his father periodically missing, his home became any dingy double room he could share with a member of the act.

One day in 1912 there dropped into his routine world the bombshell in an entertainer's life which was later known as 'an American offer.' The act he was touring with was called 'A Night with an English Music Hall.' It came to the United States, and while he was appearing somewhere in the East people began to notice this slim and melancholy little fellow who acted as a sort of one-man chorus of facial comment on the plot and dialogue of the other actors. It was not a speaking part, but he was also allowed a number of his own, a drunk who took his exit at a tangent with his feet turned out. Americans liked the show but seemed to remember best the little guy who leaned up against the proscenium in pantomime. People came to see him, including those who had gone into the mysterious game known as the cinematograph.

Chaplin was then earning possibly fifteen or twenty dollars a week. The movie impresarios offered him sixty to go to the Coast. He knew the money was a bribe and would never last. He declined. They came to him a year later and offered him a hundred. Thoroughly scared, he took it. He took with him his doubts about the nature of money. He collected it sadly and lived in a small room. He started to make a movie a week; it was usually improvised one day and shot against a backcloth the next, using a couple of city blocks for street scenes. The producers paid him more and more, and the money began to accumulate. Chaplin thought the best way to enjoy it was to pretend it didn't exist. One day he quietly hopped a train east. By the next train, rival producers were in pursuit with blank checks. In a

cheerful daze, which is the outward mask of an acute business instinct, Chaplin signed in 1917 the first — and, as it turned out, the only — contract in motion-picture history offering one million dollars a year, and the next year constructed his own studio and went permanently to work for himself.

It took him years to get the habit of wealth. He enjoyed the scramble to earn the money, but he banked it and lived in a bed-sitting-room at the Hollywood Athletic Club. Privately he still had his doubts about the permanence of the movie fad. He went on vaguely assuming that movies were being shown up and down the Pacific Coast and perhaps in a few of the capitals of the world. He was skeptical when friends showed him headlines proving that the world and his wife knew about Charlie Chaplin in Denmark and Shanghai, in Ireland and Spain. By this time the character known as Charlie Chaplin was as unreal to him as the money it brought in. It was a comedy convention, a drawing board come to life, a character that had lately trimmed its large moustache and shaved its beard and become formalized in a curly head, a cane, and a derby hat. It was a different person from the bewildered vaudeville comedian who might still wake up and have to go looking for a job in London. So Chaplin had his checks paid into the bank and often meditated over material things it would be nice to have.

In the first year or two in California, when he was still living thriftily at the Athletic Club, his brother, who had followed him and was making a modest success in the early comedies, took matters into his own hands and said, 'It's crazy for you to walk down the road and look for a cab. You're a rich man. Buy yourself a car.' Chaplin argued that he was doing very well as he was. In the end they went along to an automobile showroom and the first thing Charlie saw was a large, high sedan. He asked if it was a good car. The sales-

man started and replied, 'Why, yes, as good as they come.' Chaplin steeled himself. 'I'll take it,' he said. The salesman began to arrange for delivery. But Chaplin had felt a novel emotion. He had commanded something and the sun was still shining. He climbed in, hired a chauffeur on the spot, and chuckled his way home.

It took his brother another year to get Charlie to leave the Athletic Club and buy a house. This he had steadily refused to do. His brother wearily put on his coat and persuaded Charlie to go downtown and consult his bank balance. Charlie was appalled to discover he had upwards of nine hundred thousand dollars. 'You see,' roared Sidney, 'you can buy yourself a home.' He bought himself a home.

#### IV

He has since subdued but never relaxed his fear of being poor again. Being a philosophical person, he gets along by taking pains in his business affairs and remembering that to-morrow is another day. He now regards money as a nuisance and a necessity. Personally generous, he will spend it freely on people he likes, provided the expenses can be settled through his manager. For money you can touch and see he has an actual loathing. When he is lunching with his manager or any others of his staff, which he does daily when a new film is under way, the bill is never presented to him. One of the staff quietly pays it and reimburses himself later.

His personal living is about as extravagant as that of the average feature reporter. He gets up, eats, mooches around the piano, hits off a theme he fancies for his next film, reads for an hour or so, wanders round the garden, reads a lot more and plays tennis, has two or possibly three people he likes in to dinner. His living room — and when he's alone it's the only one he uses — is a homely thing. It is not subjected to periodical style changes and has rarely

seen anything so formal as even the rambling kind of cocktail party that writers give — nothing remotely like the celebrity parties thrown by foreign correspondents, for example. It is a lived-in room. You have no misgivings about mauling the cushions; they have been well creased. The sofas have been sat on through many an all-night talk. The piano is open and slightly out of tune.

He is very English in his desire when a job is done to stretch his toes out in the acres of leisure over the hill. Security has come to mean the right to eat when he chooses and to have room to wander around, humming old tangos, playing a piano accordion; it means not being bothered by a calendar or Hollywood's strident 'personalities.' He has difficulties here. Newer stars are often piqued at Chaplin's indifference to their fame or their parties. He goes to the movies possibly once a month and knows the names of fewer film stars than any soda-jerker in the country. He assumes another privilege that has brought him a lot of angry criticism: he does not care about time and the responsibilities set by a clock. If he is due at a party or a concert and is interrupted by a book or a friend, the odds are he will settle down with either and the engagement will never see him. At midnight he'll go out in search of food.

As the years have gone by he has kept a few close friends and grown tired of saluting the other great and near-great. There was a time when he particularly envied artists and writers what he supposed to be their special and civilized life. He wanted to meet famous men — Einstein, H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Chaliapin. He met them, and Wells became and has remained a good friend. His other friends are a doctor, a movie director, a sea captain, and one or two journalists. From his present wife he has had a companionship he never had before, and since she happens to be an extremely able hostess he thankfully leaves the mechanics of the household to

her. When he gets depressed about anything, he likes to worry his bone in private. Mrs. Chaplin has the sense to leave him alone when he is in that mood.

His matrimonial troubles were spread across the nation's front pages, not because they were more tangled than other unsuccessful marriages, but because, being an idealist, once a marriage had failed he had neither the heart nor the patience to see it briskly disposed of. He shares the Englishman's moony quest for an ideal relationship; he also shares the national distaste for admitting failure and has balked, as the English still do, at the unsentimental practicality of the divorce court.

He enjoys as much as anybody else the woven contradictions of his own personality, and will talk frankly about his feelings and his prejudices and attentively listen to suggestions about why he has them. He suffers fools with cheerful patience. He probably would be as intolerant as anybody else if he did not know that he has this ability. At fifty he is at the age to savor not so much what he has done with his life but the foolish things he knows how to avoid. 'There's nothing so enjoyable as discretion,' he once said to me. 'When you get to be over forty, it's the great virtue.' He admires reckless crusading in others and he takes naturally to men with a grouch. But, if it's all the same with you, he checked out of evangelism more than a decade ago. He is amused now by the thought that twenty years ago he was officially listed as a dangerous radical. The telegram from the Soviet on his recent birthday, lauding his artistic chores in behalf of the revolution, was greeted laughingly by a Charlie Chaplin who is a determined democrat, an anti-royalist, a good business man, and no longer as earnest as he used to be.

# V

He hates night clubs and jazz, is bored by streamlining and efficiency experts.

He has never bothered to search out for his staff rising young cameramen, film editors, or ambitious graduates from major studios. During the interval of two or three years between films, his studio, a large rambling lot with a few bungalows and a small office, is quiet as a tomb. He keeps on full pay a half-dozen studio employees — his manager, a stenographer, his projectionist, a cutter, a janitor. If they can bear the monotony of loafing around the studio for a year or two they are free to play billiards, talk, smoke, do a little carpentry perhaps, and occasionally project an old film. But they know their time will come. They are kept in reserve like the National Guard, leading a peaceable community life in the pleasant intervals between wars. There comes a day when Mr. Chaplin drops in to inspect the general staff. He wanders through the crumbling streets that made a town in an old film. He stops to examine the disrepair of the window frames of the houses. He gazes down into the arid cement basin which was his suicide's intended grave as long ago as *City Lights*. He pokes around the dismembered hull of a ship in *Modern Times* and sits down to rest on the stony bosom of the *City Lights* statue, lying now on a broken plaster elbow. He starts to envisage where new streets will be built and where the interiors will be shot. He is ready to collect the dividend from the energy his staff have been storing all that time. They must be on hand now night and day for the next two or three months, for though life may still go on outside the gates of the Chaplin studio it can have no further meaning for them until a new film has been shot, recorded, and packed away in cans for the New York première.

Only in the last two films has he ever worked from a script prepared beforehand, preferring always before then to shoot 'off the cuff' — that is, by improvising on the set from a general idea or a situation roughly imagined. With the

coming of sound films, this became a ruinously expensive procedure. Silent film was expensive enough, and Chaplin had been accustomed to waste several thousand feet of it on the hard way up to a perfect scene. But nowadays to waste a thousand feet is to waste about twelve minutes of sound recording, high voltage, and the mounting expense of a necessarily larger crew. So now Chaplin produces a shooting script first, like anybody else. This entails a delay of about nine months in shooting. But it also means that the legendary nervous tension which formerly ate up the weeks and months of unlucky actors on the set is now transferred to the ramshackle one-room bungalow, in a corner of the studio, where Chaplin works with two script writers. The shooting is quicker and smoother, and most of the temper is taken out on himself.

When he starts to write a script he goes on a schedule that never falters until the film is finished. At a quarter of ten every morning, his car rolls into the studio. Out from it jumps a nervous Chaplin in a cap, white slacks, and an angora sweater. He walks off rapidly to the bungalow and greets the writer he has employed for the film, his assistant director (this time his brother, snatched after a long exile from the Riviera), and the massive old friend, spiritual uncle and adviser, Henry Bergmann. The room they work in reflects Chaplin's deep distrust of elegant surroundings whenever there is anything serious to be done. If it was ever wallpapered, the paper has expired into mildew. It is a small room containing three wooden chairs, an old table, about a half-dozen books with peeling backs, and an ancient upright terribly out of tune. It has a window, an assortment of ash trays, and worn oilcloth on the floor. It is probably about as luxurious as any of the rooms Chaplin rented in the boardinghouses of pre-war England.

Here they stay till early evening, late evening, or midnight. A scene may be

sketched out in an hour or a week. Days go by as they thrash over a detail, and a sentence scribbled hopefully on Monday morning is still unfinished by Friday. In these days of deadlock, Chaplin is liable to pick up the script, curse the studio and the bungalow, pack his assistants into a car, and take them all back home. He has been known to regard lunch as a devil's device to break the continuity of all good human work. The point of retreating into the mountains is to come to grips with a crisis and slay it. To this end he will lock himself up with the writer and director and give his Japanese servant stern orders that he is home to nobody and will not answer the phone. He calls his studio and tells his faithful and wiry little manager Alf Reeves, who managed him in the early vaudeville days, that he is out to anybody who may write, call, or cable. The next day Reeves tells a friend, or a stockholder in New York, once a United Artists' director phoning from a corporation meeting in London: 'He can't see you, and he can't talk to you.' Alf puts down the telephone, shrugs his shoulders as he has done in the Chaplin employ for thirty years, and remarks, 'I'm on the black list, too.'

When Chaplin started to brood over the script of his present film (to be called *The Great Dictator*) the Los Angeles police were ineffectively using all the routine methods they knew to get in touch with him. They had a little matter of a subpoena to discuss. One Michael Kustoff was optimistically claiming that Chaplin had used his story in *Modern Times*. The process servers started by walking up to the front door. The Japanese servant shook his head and politely slammed the door. They tried going in with the laundry; they posed as doctors and Western Union boys. Finally, in February of this year, the federal courts gave up. Judge McCormick ruefully signed an order to allow the subpoena to be served by publication.

Meanwhile Chaplin sat in his living



room slowly composing pages of script. Last month he finished it, and this month will begin the second stage of the storm-and-stress period that precedes his films. He will begin the shooting. And it is on the studio floor surrounded by a milling cast that you can appreciate what his work means to him, and why, by ordinary studio standards, it is so slow in being born.

## VI

The average movie director rehearses painstakingly enough up to the moment of the 'first take.' He may shoot a scene as many as three times, and only one take will be used in the version the public sees. The average director may think of art in his whimsical moments, but he has also to think about the studio overhead. It is perhaps unfortunate for Chaplin's productivity that he pays his own bills and is doggedly prepared to waste thousands of dollars to get a scene the way he wants it. When the rehearsals are over — and a tiny scene has taken an hour or a day — the cast soon learns that this is only half the battle. For, with lights burning and cameras grinding and electricity sputtering away at a fearful price, he will still shoot a difficult scene as many as twenty times. It was estimated that during the actual shooting of *Modern Times* he was spending about a thousand dollars an hour. The final version constituted about a fifth of the total footage. The original length of *City Lights*, as a mere stretch of celluloid, would have reached from Hollywood somewhere into the Mohave Desert, if that would have helped. Chaplin hacked it down to one tenth its original size.

Many critics will say he could have blotted out another thousand feet and lost little. But that is an artistic comment and is curiously irrelevant to Chaplin's intentions, about which he is single-minded and immovable. His sole concern is with his own view of the Chaplin tramp character and what it can

effectively do to an audience. Before *Modern Times* appeared almost any well-wisher might have begged him to delete those pre-war subtitles written in that strangely sentimental declamatory style: 'Cured of a nervous breakdown but without a job he leaves the hospital to start life anew.' But at the moment they were of a piece with his idea of *Modern Times*. Like many another artist, he turns out his best and his worst with equal zeal. It's only a year or so after the film is out that he groans at the worst and is comically unmoved by the best which the Chaplin cultists are still clutching to their bosoms. Nothing can now induce him to see *Modern Times*: he regards it as a sorry botch. When a film has been screened, it is deadlier than last Sunday's rotogravure. He accepts any amount of criticism of it for the reason that he is no longer interested. But while it is in the making it must be thought and dreamed about, lived with, played with, talked over, through, and around.

From the actors and the crew he requires a rock-like patience. If he spies an inattentive actor from his chair on a high ladder he will flare in terrible rage, and two minutes later turn with a tired, incredulous smile to his cameraman and say, 'Can you imagine me, losing my temper like that?' The moment he recovers his temper is a moment so warm and amiable that people who have sworn to leave his employ for good and all promise themselves, 'Just this once.' The intervening crises are about as tense as any in Hollywood.

It is an odd coincidence that the two Hollywood directors who discipline their working crew to the limit of exhaustion should be the old and the new reigning comics — Chaplin and Disney. There are well-authenticated stories of artists in the Disney studio breaking down in tears before Disney's merciless insistence that a certain animal should have a nose just off retroussé or that a kick in the pants must be drawn in twelve and



not sixteen frames of film. If rightly drawn, this means to Disney an audience satisfied without strain. To the animators and draftsmen it means blood and tears. Chaplin is equally hard on actors, property men, and continuity girls, demanding that everybody should follow the inconsequent flight of his own ideas and hunches. But he is as hard on himself. If he gets an idea which he guesses will establish a character, he will produce novelettes of description and shooting script till the thing is clarified into a mere one or two shots.

A typical crisis, which took about three weeks to resolve, occurred in drafting *City Lights*.

He had a hazy but attractive idea of a blind flower girl sitting on the sidewalk selling a flower to a poor man whom she must mistake for a rich man. His assistants patched up sequences that suggested the general idea. They were shot, argued about, and destroyed. Chaplin strode all over the studio, working himself up to a pitch of anxiety which refused such homely details as food and rest. He tried every conceivable formula employing girl, flowers, sidewalk, rich man, poor man, five-dollar bill, expensive automobile. He shot these fumbling scenes and then wondered how the girl could be aware of the automobile. At the end of the third week, he suddenly conceived the vital detail — the slamming door of an automobile. In the finished movie, the incident flowed like water over a pebble, smooth and simple for all to see with no hint of the groaning pressure that had been applied. All that happened was that the poor man approached the girl, bought a flower, and gave her his last dollar bill. While he stood waiting for his change, and while she was fumbling for it, she heard an automobile door slam and the purr of a luxurious car. She hesitated, said, 'Oh, thank you, sir,' and the tramp, not wanting to break this pretty vision but sad about his vanished change, backed away on tiptoe.

Audiences recognize such expositions as 'typical Chaplin' magic, ways of mating plot and character into effortless quicksilver. Behind them, however, may be the story of a fired actor or script writer, distressed visits to the doctor, and the exhaustion of the Chaplin health and temper.

Many ambitious writers and directors have tactfully suggested that much of this clarifying process could be shared, but though Chaplin will listen carefully to theories of this and that about film making, first and last he trusts his own instinct and is careful to employ writers not noted for their personal style or invention. When a film is shot and he is running it over for editing, he will leap up in a split second to indicate exactly when a scene should end.

When he is choosing a theme or incidents for a projected film he will consider anybody's ideas. He even becomes an enthusiastic convert. But only as long as the evening lasts. The next morning, as unsentimentally as an executioner, he snuffs out the beautiful idea. Once when he was considering producing a short film to precede his feature film, a friend told him the old French legend of 'Our Lady and the Tumbler.' It is a slight and tragic sketch of a mediæval tumbler who, on his way to the next village, rests in the shadows of a nunnery. He is awed by the sight of a nun counting her beads. The Mother Superior catches him and he is thrown into a cell. At night he escapes into the chapel and in gratitude falls on his knees before the Virgin's image. He is ashamed to offer his ignorant prayers. So he decides to present, for the Virgin, the best show of his talent. He throws himself over and over. Wet and panting from going through all his tricks, he finally attempts the best and hardest tumble known to his time. He breaks his back and dies. And the Virgin comes down and blesses him in his death trance.

Chaplin read it and started one warm summer evening to sketch the script.

It is an incidental of the trade he excels in — which was that of a clown before he was a film star — that he is an agile acrobat, can navigate the high wire, and skates with professional grace. He started to act the first efforts of the poor tumbler's gratitude. He mimed a whole scene of wonder at the ritual serenity not of this world, the half-comic realization that he was ignorant, the slow self-questioning, then the quick flicker of ambition to show the only skill he knew. He was, for positively one evening only, every shape and name of humility.

The next morning he sucked his teeth and tossed away a newspaper. He said, 'Yes, it's a beautiful idea — for somebody else.' He could not be persuaded out of the conviction that film fans do not pay their quarters and shillings and francs to see the experimental art of Charles Chaplin. 'They come to see *him*,' he said, and 'him' to Chaplin means the little tramp. Ideas are good to play with, and especially ideas which can be visualized into acting. He plays with them as a violinist lingers over a cadenza, but he always knows where cadenzas belong and whether they can be played at all in the key of Charlie the tramp. He always thinks and talks of that shambling figure as he might of an absent friend in delicate health. 'He' must be coaxed and planned for and tended to give the best his admirers expect of him. It is Chaplin's greatest fear that he may lose his acute sense of what an audience expects of him. To avoid that he will gladly sacrifice new conceptions and tear up painfully composed scripts which might turn into any other art than his.

And yet he is now spending all his fretful days and nights in composing the character of a dictator. Those who have seen him re-create scenes in the life of Napoleon have no fears for his popular reception as a dramatic actor as remarkable as he is as a comic. But his moment of trial will come the first time

the new Chaplin face appears on the screen. If the audience accepts the new rôle, his dramatic career will not be threatened. If they clap the familiar moustache on to it and read the old slyness into the unfamiliar features, then the little tramp may seem an impertinence and the new character an impersonation that failed. He has taken three years to plan this tricky parallel. But *The Great Dictator* will be more than an artistic risk. As a business venture it has called for considerable daring. Chaplin has never minded losing the German and Italian revenue. He has scorned to publicize the simple error those countries make in identifying him as a Jew. This time his choice of theme almost certainly blights for him any prospect of showing the film in Poland and Portugal, in most of South America, in the admiring Soviet, and in Japan. Japan is problematical. It loves Chaplin and still on his birthday holds a ritual parade of a hundred Chaplin figures through the streets of Tokyo.

If, through some unforeseen quirk of British foreign policy, the word 'appeasement' should raise its haloed head again, Chaplin would resign himself to the possible British suppression and go right ahead with his double characterization of a dictator and a bum who gets mistaken for him. For at fifty he still has in abundance the obstinate passion to do exactly what he wants to do. And a film about dictators happens to be what he wants to do above everything else. This intractability is the mainspring of his artistic consistency. He may prize discretion now in his personal and social relations. But his work is in a world of fantasy where ideas must be wooed slowly and won for what they are worth. And when he wants to do something hard enough, the sight and sound of an emerging film are well worth to him the loss of his digestion, a friendship or two, a million dollars, or the blessing of the British Foreign Office.

# THE INDISPENSABLE OPPOSITION

BY WALTER LIPPMANN

## I

WERE they pressed hard enough, most men would probably confess that political freedom — that is to say, the right to speak freely and to act in opposition — is a noble ideal rather than a practical necessity. As the case for freedom is generally put to-day, the argument lends itself to this feeling. It is made to appear that, whereas each man claims his freedom as a matter of right, the freedom he accords to other men is a matter of toleration. Thus, the defense of freedom of opinion tends to rest not on its substantial, beneficial, and indispensable consequences, but on a somewhat eccentric, a rather vaguely benevolent, attachment to an abstraction.

It is all very well to say with Voltaire, 'I wholly disapprove of what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it,' but as a matter of fact most men will not defend to the death the rights of other men: if they disapprove sufficiently what other men say, they will somehow suppress those men if they can.

So, if this is the best that can be said for liberty of opinion, that a man must tolerate his opponents because everyone has a 'right' to say what he pleases, then we shall find that liberty of opinion is a luxury, safe only in pleasant times when men can be tolerant because they are not deeply and vitally concerned.

Yet actually, as a matter of historic fact, there is a much stronger foundation for the great constitutional right of free-

dom of speech, and as a matter of practical human experience there is a much more compelling reason for cultivating the habits of free men. We take, it seems to me, a naïvely self-righteous view when we argue as if the right of our opponents to speak were something that we protect because we are magnanimous, noble, and unselfish. The compelling reason why, if liberty of opinion did not exist, we should have to invent it, why it will eventually have to be restored in all civilized countries where it is now suppressed, is that we must protect the right of our opponents to speak because we must hear what they have to say.

We miss the whole point when we imagine that we tolerate the freedom of our political opponents as we tolerate a howling baby next door, as we put up with the blasts from our neighbor's radio because we are too peaceable to heave a brick through the window. If this were all there is to freedom of opinion, that we are too good-natured or too timid to do anything about our opponents and our critics except to let them talk, it would be difficult to say whether we are tolerant because we are magnanimous or because we are lazy, because we have strong principles or because we lack serious convictions, whether we have the hospitality of an inquiring mind or the indifference of an empty mind. And so, if we truly wish to understand why freedom is necessary in a civilized society, we must begin by realizing that, because freedom of discussion improves

our own opinions, the liberties of other men are our own vital necessity.

We are much closer to the essence of the matter, not when we quote Voltaire, but when we go to the doctor and pay him to ask us the most embarrassing questions and to prescribe the most disagreeable diet. When we pay the doctor to exercise complete freedom of speech about the cause and cure of our stomachache, we do not look upon ourselves as tolerant and magnanimous, and worthy to be admired by ourselves. We have enough common sense to know that if we threaten to put the doctor in jail because we do not like the diagnosis and the prescription it will be unpleasant for the doctor, to be sure, but equally unpleasant for our own stomachache. That is why even the most ferocious dictator would rather be treated by a doctor who was free to think and speak the truth than by his own Minister of Propaganda. For there is a point, the point at which things really matter, where the freedom of others is no longer a question of their right but of our own need.

The point at which we recognize this need is much higher in some men than in others. The totalitarian rulers think they do not need the freedom of an opposition: they exile, imprison, or shoot their opponents. We have concluded on the basis of practical experience, which goes back to Magna Carta and beyond, that we need the opposition. We pay the opposition salaries out of the public treasury.

In so far as the usual apology for freedom of speech ignores this experience, it becomes abstract and eccentric rather than concrete and human. The emphasis is generally put on the right to speak, as if all that mattered were that the doctor should be free to go out into the park and explain to the vacant air why I have a stomachache. Surely that is a miserable caricature of the great civic right which men have bled and died for. What really matters is that the doctor should tell *me* what ails me, that I should listen

to him; that if I do not like what he says I should be free to call in another doctor; and that then the first doctor should have to listen to the second doctor; and that out of all the speaking and listening, the give-and-take of opinions, the truth should be arrived at.

This is the creative principle of freedom of speech, not that it is a system for the tolerating of error, but that it is a system for finding the truth. It may not produce the truth, or the whole truth all the time, or often, or in some cases ever. But if the truth can be found, there is no other system which will normally and habitually find so much truth. Until we have thoroughly understood this principle, we shall not know why we must value our liberty, or how we can protect and develop it.

## II

Let us apply this principle to the system of public speech in a totalitarian state. We may, without any serious falsification, picture a condition of affairs in which the mass of the people are being addressed through one broadcasting system by one man and his chosen subordinates. The orators speak. The audience listens but cannot and dare not speak back. It is a system of one-way communication; the opinions of the rulers are broadcast outwardly to the mass of the people. But nothing comes back to the rulers from the people except the cheers; nothing returns in the way of knowledge of forgotten facts, hidden feelings, neglected truths, and practical suggestions.

But even a dictator cannot govern by his own one-way inspiration alone. In practice, therefore, the totalitarian rulers get back the reports of the secret police and of their party henchmen down among the crowd. If these reports are competent, the rulers may manage to remain in touch with public sentiment. Yet that is not enough to know what the audience feels. The rulers have also to make great

decisions that have enormous consequences, and here their system provides virtually no help from the give-and-take of opinion in the nation. So they must either rely on their own intuition, which cannot be permanently and continually inspired, or, if they are intelligent despots, encourage their trusted advisers and their technicians to speak and debate freely in their presence.

On the walls of the houses of Italian peasants one may see inscribed in large letters the legend, 'Mussolini is always right.' But if that legend is taken seriously by Italian ambassadors, by the Italian General Staff, and by the Ministry of Finance, then all one can say is heaven help Mussolini, heaven help Italy, and the new Emperor of Ethiopia.

For at some point, even in a totalitarian state, it is indispensable that there should exist the freedom of opinion which causes opposing opinions to be debated. As time goes on, that is less and less easy under a despotism; critical discussion disappears as the internal opposition is liquidated in favor of men who think and feel alike. That is why the early successes of despots, of Napoleon I and of Napoleon III, have usually been followed by an irreparable mistake. For in listening only to his yes men — the others being in exile or in concentration camps, or terrified — the despot shuts himself off from the truth that no man can dispense with.

We know all this well enough when we contemplate the dictatorships. But when we try to picture our own system, by way of contrast, what picture do we have in our minds? It is, is it not, that anyone may stand up on his own soapbox and say anything he pleases, like the individuals in Kipling's poem who sit each in his separate star and draw the Thing as they see it for the God of Things as they are. Kipling, perhaps, could do this, since he was a poet. But the ordinary mortal isolated on his separate star will have an hallucination, and a citizenry declaiming from separate soapboxes will

poison the air with hot and nonsensical confusion.

If the democratic alternative to the totalitarian one-way broadcasts is a row of separate soapboxes, then I submit that the alternative is unworkable, is unreasonable, and is humanly unattractive. It is above all a false alternative. It is not true that liberty has developed among civilized men when anyone is free to set up a soapbox, is free to hire a hall where he may expound his opinions to those who are willing to listen. On the contrary, freedom of speech is established to achieve its essential purpose only when different opinions are expounded in the same hall to the same audience.

For, while the right to talk may be the beginning of freedom, the necessity of listening is what makes the right important. Even in Russia and Germany a man may still stand in an open field and speak his mind. What matters is not the utterance of opinions. What matters is the confrontation of opinions in debate. No man can care profoundly that every fool should say what he likes. Nothing has been accomplished if the wisest man proclaims his wisdom in the middle of the Sahara Desert. This is the shadow. We have the substance of liberty when the fool is compelled to listen to the wise man and learn; when the wise man is compelled to take account of the fool, and to instruct him; when the wise man can increase his wisdom by hearing the judgment of his peers.

That is why civilized men must cherish liberty — as a means of promoting the discovery of truth. So we must not fix our whole attention on the right of anyone to hire his own hall, to rent his own broadcasting station, to distribute his own pamphlets. These rights are incidental; and though they must be preserved, they can be preserved only by regarding them as incidental, as auxiliary to the substance of liberty that must be cherished and cultivated.

Freedom of speech is best conceived, therefore, by having in mind the picture



of a place like the American Congress, an assembly where opposing views are represented, where ideas are not merely uttered but debated, or the British Parliament, where men who are free to speak are also compelled to answer. We may picture the true condition of freedom as existing in a place like a court of law, where witnesses testify and are cross-examined, where the lawyer argues against the opposing lawyer before the same judge and in the presence of one jury. We may picture freedom as existing in a forum where the speaker must respond to questions; in a gathering of scientists where the data, the hypothesis, and the conclusion are submitted to men competent to judge them; in a reputable newspaper which not only will publish the opinions of those who disagree but will reexamine its own opinion in the light of what they say.

Thus the essence of freedom of opinion is not in mere toleration as such, but in the debate which toleration provides: it is not in the venting of opinion, but in the confrontation of opinion. That this is the practical substance can readily be understood when we remember how differently we feel and act about the censorship and regulation of opinion purveyed by different media of communication. We find then that, in so far as the medium makes difficult the confrontation of opinion in debate, we are driven towards censorship and regulation.

There is, for example, the whispering campaign, the circulation of anonymous rumors by men who cannot be compelled to prove what they say. They put the utmost strain on our tolerance, and there are few who do not rejoice when the anonymous slanderer is caught, exposed, and punished. At a higher level there is the moving picture, a most powerful medium for conveying ideas, but a medium which does not permit debate. A moving picture cannot be answered effectively by another moving picture; in all free countries there is some censorship of the movies, and there would be more if the

producers did not recognize their limitations by avoiding political controversy. There is then the radio. Here debate is difficult: it is not easy to make sure that the speaker is being answered in the presence of the same audience. Inevitably, there is some regulation of the radio.

When we reach the newspaper press, the opportunity for debate is so considerable that discontent cannot grow to the point where under normal conditions there is any disposition to regulate the press. But when newspapers abuse their power by injuring people who have no means of replying, a disposition to regulate the press appears. When we arrive at Congress we find that, because the membership of the House is so large, full debate is impracticable. So there are restrictive rules. On the other hand, in the Senate, where the conditions of full debate exist, there is almost absolute freedom of speech.

This shows us that the preservation and development of freedom of opinion are not only a matter of adhering to abstract legal rights, but also, and very urgently, a matter of organizing and arranging sufficient debate. Once we have a firm hold on the central principle, there are many practical conclusions to be drawn. We then realize that the defense of freedom of opinion consists primarily in perfecting the opportunity for an adequate give-and-take of opinion; it consists also in regulating the freedom of those revolutionists who cannot or will not permit or maintain debate when it does not suit their purposes.

We must insist that free oratory is only the beginning of free speech; it is not the end, but a means to an end. The end is to find the truth. The practical justification of civil liberty is not that self-expression is one of the rights of man. It is that the examination of opinion is one of the necessities of man. For experience tells us that it is only when freedom of opinion becomes the compulsion to debate that the seed which our fathers

planted has produced its fruit. When that is understood, freedom will be cherished not because it is a vent for our opinions but because it is the surest method of correcting them.

The unexamined life, said Socrates, is unfit to be lived by man. This is the virtue of liberty, and the ground on which we may best justify our belief in it, that it tolerates error in order to serve the truth. When men are brought face to face with their opponents, forced to listen and learn and mend their ideas, they cease to be children and savages and begin to live like civilized men. Then only is freedom a reality, when men may voice their opinions because they must examine their opinions.

### III

The only reason for dwelling on all this is that if we are to preserve democracy we must understand its principles. And the principle which distinguishes it from all other forms of government is that in a democracy the opposition not only is tolerated as constitutional but must be maintained because it is in fact indispensable.

The democratic system cannot be operated without effective opposition. For, in making the great experiment of governing people by consent rather than by coercion, it is not sufficient that the party in power should have a majority.

It is just as necessary that the party in power should never outrage the minority. That means that it must listen to the minority and be moved by the criticisms of the minority. That means that its measures must take account of the minority's objections, and that in administering measures it must remember that the minority may become the majority.

The opposition is indispensable. A good statesman, like any other sensible human being, always learns more from his opponents than from his fervent supporters. For his supporters will push him to disaster unless his opponents show him where the dangers are. So if he is wise he will often pray to be delivered from his friends, because they will ruin him. But, though it hurts, he ought also to pray never to be left without opponents; for they keep him on the path of reason and good sense.

The national unity of a free people depends upon a sufficiently even balance of political power to make it impracticable for the administration to be arbitrary and for the opposition to be revolutionary and irreconcilable. Where that balance no longer exists, democracy perishes. For unless all the citizens of a state are forced by circumstances to compromise, unless they feel that they can affect policy but that no one can wholly dominate it, unless by habit and necessity they have to give and take, freedom cannot be maintained.

# THE BALLAD OF MARCO POLO

BY STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

*Marco Polo, curious man,  
What drove you to seek for Kublai Khan?*

Perhaps it was youth, for I was young,  
Perhaps it was my father's tongue  
The desert hawk I had never seen  
Till the years of my age were turned fifteen,  
For I was not born when he went away  
To trade beyond the rim of the day,  
And, when he returned, we were strange and shy,  
Meeting each other, he and I,  
For a lost bride's eyes looked out at him,  
My mother's, who died in bearing me,  
And the lines in his visage were great and grim  
And I knew he had been in Tartary.

*Marco Polo, how did it fall  
That at last you followed him, after all?*

When the world shut in with candlelight,  
They would talk to each other, night on night,  
While the water lapped at the landing stair  
And they hardly knew that I was there  
Except as a shadow the candle threw  
When the wind before the morning blew  
And the great house creaked like a ship of stone,  
Maffeo and Nicolo,  
Talking of marvels past renown,  
Talking of wonders still to do —  
Their talk was honey and wine and snow,  
How could I help but drink it down?  
How could I help but thirst and burn,  
When they opened the bag of camel's hair  
And looked at the marvel hidden there  
And said, 'It is time and we must return'?

*Marco Polo, what did you see,  
When at length you came to Tartary?*

I know I have been where I have been,  
But how can I tell you what I have seen?  
I know the desert of the dry tree  
Whose branches bear eternity,  
And the hot sickness of the noon.  
I drank the mare's milk of the tents,  
I saw the musk ox gape at me,  
I have had gold and frankincense  
And silks that glitter like the moon,  
But what can I tell that will make you see?

*Marco Polo, wandering sword,  
What manner of man did you call lord?*

I have been the pope's and the doge's man,  
But I never knew master like Kublai Khan.  
The sons of his body sit ten by ten  
At buffets of precious napery,  
When he hunts, he hunts with ten thousand men  
And his Tartar falcons darken the sky,  
He has jewels uncounted and golden plate  
Whence even his meanest slaves may eat,  
And he sits and numbers the hairs of fate  
With a great, tame lion crouched at his feet,  
And his mercy as fair as a white ram's fleece,  
Mighty in battle and just in peace,  
Star of the city of Kanbalu,  
Khan of Khans and Great of the Great  
Whose bounty falls like the morning dew —  
Since Adam delved and Eve span  
Who ever saw prince like Kublai Khan?

*Marco Polo, tell me how  
Your Venice talks of your travels now.*

They call me braggart, they call me liar,  
They gawk at me like an eater of fire,  
'Millions' Polo, the fable-monger,  
Who dines on a lizard to stay his hunger,  
Such being his custom in Cathay.  
But they laughed with their beards another way,

When we came back in '95  
Like ghosts returned to a world alive,  
With our gear still smelling of musk and civet  
And my father's beard grown whiter than privet,  
Two old men and a younger one  
Who had looked in the eye of Eastern sun  
And lived — and lived to tell the tale  
Which I tell to the shadows in this, my jail.  
Why, my very cousins did not own us  
And the jeering crowd was ready to stone us  
Till we ripped the riches out of our rags  
And proved we were Polos — by moneybags!

Let them laugh as long as they like to-day!  
I have seen Cathay, I have seen Cathay!  
Their little Europe — their dwarfish West —  
Their doge with his ring and his marriage fee!  
I have stolen the eggs from the phoenix nest  
And walked by the shores of the Ocean-Sea,  
The earth-encircler, the Asian main,  
And, if Kublai lived, I would go again,  
For what is their quarrel of gimerack lords,  
Their toy fleets sailing a herring pond,  
By the might that mastered the Tartar hordes?  
There are worlds beyond, there are worlds beyond,  
Worlds to be conquered, worlds to be found  
By river and desert and burning ground,  
Even, perchance, by the Ocean-Sea  
If a man has courage enough to dare,  
And I know that others will follow me  
And I mark the roads that will take them there,  
The roads of the golden caravan,  
The whole great East in its roaring youth,  
For — there was a prince named Kublai Khan —  
And I, the liar, have told the truth.



## A CHALLENGE TO MEDICINE

[In the June *Atlantic*, Dr. Henry E. Sigerist, Director of the Institute of the History of Medicine at Johns Hopkins, argued the case for socialized medicine in the United States. He cited the extensive surveys which have been carried out in this country by private and public agencies in the past decade; he compared the medical services here with those in Yugoslavia, Denmark, New Zealand, and Chile; and he concluded that, 'under the present social and economic conditions of the country, compulsory health insurance combined with an extension of the public-health services is the best possible solution.' We now present the views of three doctors who question the practical advantages of Dr. Sigerist's program and who argue that there is a more moderate and 'American' way of improving our national health. — THE EDITOR]

### OUR NATIONAL HEALTH

BY HAVEN EMERSON

THESE are words to conjure with, for the health of a people stands at the side of liberty under the law and freedom in religious faith as a high objective for self-governing communities. The motives and methods of those who would replace professional by political control of medicine will bear critical scrutiny. A passionate desire for benevolence is often mated with fondness for power, where honesty of purpose is the excuse for impatience with opposition and contempt for practical difficulties. The honorable and enduring marriage of medicine and government has been too productive of social and individual benefits among us to be safely threatened by contemporary theorists and their administrative ambitions.

We are told that there are sick who are not served and that protection of health is not uniform in quality or universally available. To such obvious truths we assent, and as a measure of our belief and purpose we point to a half century and more of uninterrupted progress in both of these reasonable and primary demands upon the medical profession. Under all forms of government there has been for the past hundred years an overflowing treasury of inter-

nationally available knowledge of human biology and of the natural history of disease, its treatment and prevention. The results have been everywhere in the same direction, differing only in degree and time of occurrence. The suffering of the sick has been made more tolerable and of shorter duration, deaths have been prevented or postponed, and probability of survival has been improved at all ages. The rate and manner of such progress have varied with forms of government and with that major associated economic factor, the general standard of living of the wage earner. Where literacy and general education prevail, where earnings are high relative to the cost of living, and government does not exact an excessive share of income by taxes for its own activities and for past or threatening wars, there the individual, family, and social or political unit have invested with good judgment and a growing generosity in medical care. A useful index of this in our own country is the rising ratio of licensed physicians and of hospital beds to the number of the population, and increase in the per capita expenditures for public health.

This was characteristic of most of the political jurisdictions and population aggregates of the United States prior to 1929 and has, in the wealthier states and urban communities, prevailed up

to the present time. Physicians of better education and in larger numbers have been more widely distributed, hospital capacity has been expanded in rural as well as in city areas and facilities improved to provide for diagnosis and treatment otherwise unobtainable, and sums devoted to the constructive and protective purposes of health have steadily mounted, as the people came to understand the values thus created. In all of this there has been a considerate and helpful partnership between philanthropy and government, between voluntary gifts of services and funds and their provision by tax monies under official auspices.

Under our tradition of free initiative in the selection and pursuit of self-support, whether in trade or profession, physicians have been drawn more to those areas where density of population, financial advantage, and pleasant conditions for the family were most promising than to impoverished, backward, and sparsely settled areas where neither brains nor devotion could win a reasonable medical livelihood.

Greater intricacy and refinement in medical techniques, and increasing interdependency of many specialties and the associated scientific skills in caring for the sick, have raised the cost of medical care, but not out of proportion to that of other satisfactions and necessities of modern life which people have learned to demand and pay for.

In a few of our states at large, and in an undetermined number of counties and smaller areas in a few other states, the average per capita income appears to be insufficient to permit that personal or collective investment necessary to provide for all the people medical services generally found in more favored states and communities, and there accepted as necessary.

The unexpectedness or unpredictability of illness is its most unpleasant and disturbing characteristic from a social and economic point of view, particu-

larly in the case of serious or catastrophic emergencies of accident, infection, and senescence. It would seem that insurance principles would apply to secure for the people of small means medical care which the individual can afford if at all only at great sacrifice. Efforts should be continued to discover equitable methods to this end, but it must be admitted that no voluntary or compulsory collective system for meeting the cost of medical care in sickness has been put into operation abroad or in this country without development of abuses by the beneficiaries or sacrifice of medical progress among the physicians involved, or both. It has been claimed by some governments abroad, and conceded by their representative physicians and others, that some of the low-paid wage earners have received under compulsory sickness-insurance schemes more and better care than they had obtained before at their sole initiative and expense. It is well to bear in mind that in the opinion of competent sociologists and economists the dominant motive of all such insurance plans is relief of poverty and not the preservation of the public health.

This truth, well recognized by the physicians of this country, accounts for some at least of the determined opposition of our medical profession to what is promoted under the misnomer of health insurance and is really a project for the spending of public funds as merely one way of redistributing wealth without regard to the quality or results of the medical service to be bought. The people of the United States and their physicians would be blind and churlish indeed if they did not take to heart the lessons of European experience, and gratefully acknowledge the warnings of the social ordering of medicine abroad which has been a major factor in Europe's loss of scientific leadership in health and care of sickness.

An independent body of physicians determined to keep control of its stand-

ards of professional education and to continue in effect its guardianship of the interests of the sick, together with the voluntary or endowed hospital system which is the particular glory of individual and collective philanthropy in our generation, and most lately the development of prepayment plans to meet the hospital costs of illness, have been the chief elements in the success of American medicine in emphasizing quality of care rather than mass production, and in distinguishing between benevolent sentimentality and the blessings of the sanitary and medical sciences.

What, then, can be suggested to bring to all who need and wish to use them the resources of medical art and science, whether in sickness or for health, at a cost within personal or collective means? Are we to believe that there is a pressing national need, some urgent threat of neglected suffering created by failure of individual or administrative medicine? Is the time ripe for a considerable expansion in the amount of medical care for all the people and a shift of responsibility for it? Are the skills ready, and the means to implement them? Is it medical reorganization, or economic reorganization, or plain confidence that the people need to achieve their reasonable desires? Is federal legislation as proposed in the Capper bill (S. 658) and in the Wagner bill (S. 1620) likely to bring about more improvement in national health than can be expected otherwise? These and similar questions must be answered before physicians will accept administrative novelty as if it would necessarily bring a new superiority of medical care.

Dr. Sigerist has told you of his *confidence* that 'our medical problem will be solved in a not distant future,' of his *belief* 'in the common sense of the people,' of his 'faith in the young medical generation.' He admits that what he calls 'health insurance,' which in reality is compulsory insurance against the cost of sickness, is 'not a panacea' or 'the

ideal system,' but he believes that 'under the present social and economic conditions of the country' it is the best possible solution if 'combined with an extension of public-health services.'

It seems to me reckless for the historian to attempt prophecy, or for a physician without wide experience in care of the sick or in public health to assume the rôle of medical economist or social expert, or for any recent arrival in our medical community, imbued as Dr. Sigerist is with the ideologies of other lands, to condemn the policies and actions of the profession of his adopted land, the realities of whose work are so remote from his own responsibilities.

The Assembly of the California Legislature is reported to have repudiated on June 15 its Governor's favorite compulsory sickness-insurance bill by a 48-to-20 vote. The New York State Legislature adopted at its 1939 session the cautious plan of creating a commission to make further study of the facts before availing itself of its authority under the new state constitution to enact laws to provide for an insurance system for medical care. The Capper bill has met Congressional indifference, and lacks even the publicity of committee hearings to consider its federal requirements for compulsory sickness insurance for wage earners at the \$60-a-week level or below.

Dr. Sigerist not only approves heartily of this bill as sound and constructive and 'undoubtedly a great improvement on all European schemes,' but declares that it 'demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of the population, including the needy group, can be embraced by such a combination of compulsory and voluntary insurance.' How a project of law still sleeping in committee can *demonstrate* anything but the hopes of its author and the ingenuity of legislative drafters is not apparent.

Senator Wagner has taken the lessons of European experience to heart, or perhaps he has had intimations of political inexpediency as well as of almost unani-

mous disapproval by physicians, dentists, and hospital administrators, and so has not provided openly and specifically for compulsory sickness insurance in the present form of his bill.

When President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 7481, in October 1936, directing his Interdepartmental Committee to prepare a plan for better coordination of the health and welfare functions of the Federal Government, there seemed to be a prospect of critical study and constructive proposals which would correct the costly and confusing duplication of function and structure in our health agencies. Nothing of the kind has developed. Instead we have had a report from a technical committee, hardly more than a restatement of the findings of the unofficial Committee on the Costs of Medical Care of a decade ago. Following this came the stupendous product of the misnamed and still uncorroborated 'National Health Survey,' which was a search for sickness, not a study of health. While the records are doubtless unbiased and the statistical analysis competent, the interpretations of the answers collected by the army of WPA investigators have created a volume of exaggeration as to the extent of medical inadequacy in the United States. From all parts of the country, evidence is being collected which casts serious doubt on the oft-repeated and, if true, shocking statement that more than a third of our population lack medical care and that a still larger number suffer from economic disadvantage because of illness. And out of all this great expense and publicity comes not a word of explanation for the lack of medical care in each case so reported, because this question was not included in the survey schedule.

Then came the so-called National Health Conference in July 1938, where the decisions of the Interdepartmental Committee were delivered to a couple of hundred of mostly willing and responsive listeners. No conference and no

discussion occurred, and the matter was closed as it began with a news release of predetermined conclusions.

Then, in February 1939, came the Wagner bill with its fantastic provision for more than 250 advisory councils, appointed by three administrative chiefs of bureaus, to consider, but not determine, the rules and conditions under which every state, whether wealthy or poor, healthy or sick, shall receive large federal subsidies for six several objects, including care of the sick, cash-indemnity insurance, hospital construction, and public-health services. To this extravagant proposal for enlarging the scope of federal spending at the sacrifice of the resources and self-determination of the states the medical profession is opposed, for reasons readily accessible in the *Congressional Record* and in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

To raise still further the exceptionally high level of our present national health, and to increase the availability of good care for the sick, physicians have urged the following:—

1. Centralization of all federal health and medical-care functions (except for Army and Navy) under the Surgeon-General of the United States Public Health Service and preferably with a Secretary of Health in the Cabinet.

2. Full-time trained public-health officers in charge of state and local health departments to serve all political subdivisions of sufficient size to justify the essential personnel.

3. State legislation which will authorize, in the interest of self-supporting wage earners and their families, plans for voluntary hospital prepayment and cash-indemnity insurance for sickness.

4. Assumption by local and state governments of financial responsibility for care of the indigent sick, so far as this is not voluntarily provided for by private philanthropy and the medical profession.

5. Retention and further coöperative development of the dual system of

voluntary and tax-supported hospitals and dispensaries, with special attention to the needs of the rural population.

6. Continuance of the present functions of state and local government in the almost exclusive responsibility for institutional care of mental diseases, tuberculosis, and acute communicable diseases.

7. Provision as in the past several decades for federal grants-in-aid through the United States Public Health Service to states for *prevention* of disease, where it can be shown that state and local resources are insufficient to meet reasonable standards of public-health service.

Medicine's answer to the challenge of the present federal administration for still better national health is to hold to the good ways we have learned to value, and to alter or expand these only as evidence brings conviction of the need, and as resources are available which will not handicap our successors by imposing upon them increasing burdensome indebtedness.

## THE AMERICAN WAY

EVEN the superficially informed reader of Dr. Sigerist's article 'The Realities of Socialized Medicine' must, whatever be his political or medical complexion, find fault with the use of the word 'Realities.' Certainly it is not a reality that all those who had the nation's health at heart welcomed the so-called National Health Conference. Some recognized it for what it was — not a conference at all in the usual sense, but a meeting for the announcement of an already-prepared plan whose adoption, in the opinion of many, might well lead to national disaster. Surely the scientific side of Dr. Sigerist recognizes that the 'documentary evidence' concerning one third of our population's being without medical service has been seriously questioned, and in any event means little. In a given year there are many (perhaps

one third) who do not feel the need of a doctor and do not want one. Others are too ignorant or indolent to seek care. This does not mean that medical care is unobtainable. Of real importance is the excellent evidence that equally good medical service — and probably better — is just as available to all but a few thousands of our citizens, rich or poor, as could be most optimistically expected with any variety or shade of socialized medicine.

Not only does our present system make medical care accessible, but there are good indications that it is associated with better national health than is the case with other systems. Dr. Sigerist admits this point but attempts, with some justification, to explain it on the basis of higher living standards in the United States. He fails to emphasize, however, a much more salient fact: that is, the steady improvement in our health as opposed to the stationary or, frequently, retrograde condition of other peoples. As an actual fact, even preventive medicine tends to deteriorate with more than a minimum of control over the medical profession.

It should not be thought from the above paragraphs that our medical profession — the American Medical Association, if you please — is static, and unaware of or apathetic about defects in medical practice, as Dr. Sigerist and other critics intimate. Dr. Sigerist knows well that the A.M.A. not only fosters scientific advancement but also carefully studies the systems of other countries, and has approved numerous medical economic experiments of its component societies. Many workable changes have resulted. The insurance principle has been endorsed, but with what experience has shown to be reasonable reservations designed to safeguard the patient and the advancement of medical knowledge, and to avoid pernicious political control. I trust, and believe, the A.M.A. will never be stampeded into superficially ideal but obviously impractical schemes.



Dr. Sigerist says that American doctors know little of European systems. On the contrary, I believe we have studied them rather thoroughly — hence the earnest resolve to work out something better. Incidentally, the estimate of larger medical incomes might or might not be a ‘reality’ with Dr. Sigerist’s socialized medicine. However, medical men recognize the promise as an inevitable part of each and every scheme — and, to be perfectly frank, believe they detect the smell of bait. Some, it should be realized, are even angered by the implication, real or imagined, that they can be bribed to forget their ideals.

Much more could be said (about costs, for instance) in refutation of Dr. Sigerist’s article as an exposition of the realities of socialized medicine. And, in this matter, realities are essential. Certainly the majority of medical men believe that their own association can come nearer to the truth than any individual or other group. These physicians have not forgotten, in the recent wave of criticism and ‘smearing,’ that the A. M. A. now, as always, stands and works for the advancement of medicine and the welfare of mankind, and that it is still under the influence and leadership of the most intelligent, informed, and public-spirited doctors of America.

Finally — and this is said in all sincerity — may I question the propriety of the *Atlantic’s* seeming endorsement of Dr. Sigerist, who is primarily a historian and a rather recent arrival from Europe, as a qualified authority for the reassurance of Americans in regard to what, in its ultimate goal, means the introduction into this country of the Russian system of medical care?

ROGER S. SIDDALL

WITH the June issue the *Atlantic* makes the doctor once more remove the stethoscope from his ears and take notice. This time there is no smile on his face as he reads Dr. Sigerist’s article, ‘The Realities of Socialized Medicine.’ A

careless reader may not realize that Medicine is like the Atlantic. Both have two sides — a European side and an American one. Europe: totalitarian; control from above. America: personal initiative; control from within.

Despite many present-day tendencies, it is still our glorious national belief that this is a free democracy where activities are best conducted under a system of freedom of development and control. Why should Medicine be selected for governmental regimentation any more than, for example, the Church? Those who know the inner story of the strangulation of medical progress in Europe from governmental rigidity feel that American medical science and art are the hope of the profession to-day. Right now, by its own free efforts, American medicine leads the world. Even socially the picture painted by Dr. Sigerist is far too black. Less than 5 per cent of the people of the United States are more than thirty miles from a hospital. With automobiles and good roads, that is a fine distribution. The people, not the doctors, must be educated to use the facilities they have. Strange, but true; in the older communities where there are the greatest number of hospital beds per thousand of the population, these beds are utilized by patients for a much greater number of total days per year than are the fewer beds in the hospitals of communities that seem to have poor hospital facilities. The fewer the beds, the more they stand idle!

Dr. Sigerist was born in France and educated in Switzerland and Germany. Naturally he was ‘conditioned’ from very childhood to a Bismarckian concept of state medicine. The Chair of the History of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University now occupied by Dr. Sigerist was founded and first held by Dr. William H. Welch. How we should like to hear our ‘Popsy’ tell us now what he thought of socialized medicine!

JOSEPH T. SMITH

# SEA CAPTAIN'S RETURN

BY HELEN FORBES

## I

PERSIS ILLOTT hurried along the River Road. Afternoon school was over and she did not intend to waste any more of this lovely warm spring day. She meant to dash into the house and be off again, but when she reached her own gate she saw that something had happened; the front door was now guarded by the two great Chinese porcelain elephants that always stood there in summer. It was the surest sign of spring when the elephants came out from winter quarters, and in her pleasure she could not help stopping to straddle one of them for a minute, although she knew that her mother would think that eleven was too old for such unladylike behavior.

It was not so much the spring itself that she had been longing for; her father was coming home from sea in the spring.

'Mother, are you there?' she called, before the front door had time to bang behind her. She was supposed to go around to the side entry and take off her India rubbers before she came into the house, but riding the elephant had held her up; she used the nearest door.

Exactly as Persis expected, her mother answered from the upstairs sitting room where she usually sat in the afternoon. 'Here I am, my dear.' Then, as her daughter came thumping up the stairs two at a time and was near enough for a conversational tone, she added, 'Come where I am. Don't call.'

Persis was so accustomed to this remark that she hardly heard it. 'Here's the mail,' she said, and dropped it into

her mother's lap. Then she put her arms around her mother's neck and stooped to kiss the spot behind her ear that always made her shiver and laugh. 'You have a letter from Aunt Marge' — to show how well she knew the handwriting. Then she kissed her again, this time on the forehead. Her mother was so sweet, so grown-up and far away, and yet so dear. No one could ever know how Persis loved her.

Mrs. Illott had opened her letter now and Persis must wait to tell her plans for the afternoon. In the meantime she thrust a hand deep into the tall hawthorn rose jar, a habit of hers, stirring and sniffing vigorously and reminding herself that it would not be long now before her father came to sit in this room and shout at her, 'Let that alone! You'll give us all hay fever and you'll break the jar.' Not that he truly wanted her to stop playing with the spicy rose leaves; she always knew when he meant to be obeyed. He was only telling her to be careful of the blue jar, and of course she was, with or without his warning. Then, as her mother opened the *Boston Traveler*, Persis asked, 'May I go upriver now? I shan't catch cold, and Hall painted the boat last week, so it must be dry enough.'

Having forestalled probable objections, she turned to get her answer, and stopped short. Her mother's face had lost its calm.

'What is it?' Glancing at the wide-spread sheet, she saw that it was open

to the Shipping News. 'Has Father's ship come in? It has! I know it has!'

Mrs. Illott answered with lips that had gone dry. 'Yes.'

Persis leaned over to read, screwing her eyes to see the fine print from that angle. She was excited and happy beyond words. She had known, from the elephants, but not that it would happen so soon.

## ARRIVED

| <i>Vessel</i>       | <i>From</i> |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Maggie May.....     | Liverpool   |
| T. H. Harrison..... | Savannah    |
| Lima.....           | Calcutta    |
| Sea Flower.....     | Lisbon      |

'*Sea Flower* is in! He'll be here to-night!'

Persis was well acquainted with her father's custom of arriving at the house unexpectedly. He never sent a telegram, as Kitty Lord's father did the minute he came into port. Sometimes Persis thought that he acted as if he believed that she and her mother stayed precisely as he left them when he said good-bye, and spent all their time in waiting for him to bring them to life again when he came home. Of course that idea was silly, because he wanted them to be doing things, the more the better. When they told him that they had been in Salem or Boston he said that they were sensible people, that you rotted if you sat at home all the time. He often said that he was never really happy except when he was sailing out of a harbor and could feel the ship beginning to swing under his feet, on her way to the other side of the earth.

That might be partly true, but not altogether, because Persis knew very well how he loved it here in Underhill with them. When he said such things Persis could see that he hurt her mother, and it seemed foolish for anybody to be sensitive and literal about Father's remarks. Persis could understand him, for she, too, had a bad habit of saying things more forcefully than she meant. Half the time there was no need of paying

much attention to what she or her father said. Persis liked that way of talking. It made interest and excitement, but her mother thought that every word should stand for exactly what was intended.

Persis found a book and sat down on a footstool close to her mother's chair. She didn't want to go upriver now because there was something important going on at home, and besides, she knew that her mother would like to have her stay with her. She wanted to turn over in her mind the glorious thought of her father's coming; and with it the disturbing fact that her mother was often afraid of Father.

Persis could not understand why anyone was afraid of him, but she knew that a great many people were. Perhaps not exactly afraid, but they were particular about the way they treated him. He had a way of being emphatic that bothered people who did not know and admire him. To her it seemed natural for a man to bang his fist on the table until the silver leaped; it didn't mean anything but that he wanted something quickly, and the maid was a goose to weep just because the noise startled her. Persis must not act as her father did because she was going to be a woman.

But she loved her mother too dearly not to sympathize with her, and now as she sat on the footstool, pretending to read, she held fast to the toe of the nearer bronze slipper, in silent affection. Things were so perfect, when they two were alone, she and her precious mother. Why should everything be changed when Father came home from sea? He was a good deal like a blustering October gale, but surely Mother had known him long enough to understand him.

There were French windows in Mrs. Illott's sitting room and from her low seat Persis could look under the rail of the balcony outside and see the river's mouth and the breakwater, and out to sea. How she wished that the clipper ships came into this harbor nowadays

and sailed up the river, as they did before the Rebellion, before she was born. Then the ships that belonged in Underhill came straight home; they had a landmark famous all along the coast — the three hills that gave the town its name. If only at the end of some voyage Persis could watch *Sea Flower* coming, first like a white petal against the sky, a petal growing larger, like a magic plant in India, until there were many petals, billowed into roundness by the wind and growing larger, larger, until there was no illusion, only the sight of a wonderful ship. Persis had gone to Boston and watched *Sea Flower* go out, last April, but Father was going away then. When she was coming back the ship would be glorious and splendid, with no regrets to spoil her beauty.

## II

Her father did not like to have her hanging round the station on the chance of his coming, so there was no question of going to meet a train; but after the five o'clock from Boston, Persis was not surprised to see him striding ahead of the straggling line of people who had been spending the day in the city. The station was on the other side of the river and she could watch for several minutes while he walked up to the bridge on Main Street and then turned to come towards their house.

Whenever he came home she saw and loved things about him that she had not noticed when he went away. She was beginning to know why she was so proud of him. He was tall and his keen eyes looked down on most men. She could see that people on the way spoke to him, but he did not stop to talk to anyone; swinging the heavy stick that he carried on his walks ashore, as though to help him keep his balance on solid earth, he outdistanced everybody else, and the folds of his long blue cape opened and swayed backwards as he came.

When he reached the beginning of their land she ran to unlatch the gate for him.

'Well, my daughter, how goes the world with you?' Hooking her arm with the crook of his stick, he drew her close. He was as glad to see her as she was to have him at home again.

Arm in arm they mounted the path to the door, where Mrs. Illott was standing. Then Persis knew that she was forgotten. Her turn to greet him had come first, and for the moment it was completely over, but she did not care because of what she saw in her mother's face. Mother was happy! Everything was as it should be! And Mother was beautiful to-night. Persis knew that she saw in her some of the things that Father was seeing; she loved her gray-blue eyes and her velvet voice and her slimness and the way that part of her always seemed to be at a distance, so that she could come back to them and be all the more precious because they had all of her so seldom. No one could help adoring her, and of course it annoyed Father when she was afraid of him. She ought to know better.

They went back to the upstairs sitting room and Persis watched her father as he looked around the room, enjoying being at home again. It was good for him to be in a lady's room for a change. It was good for him and he liked it. Rather different from his cooped-up cabin where he sat at his table and was able to touch his berth on one side and his bookshelves on the other. Not but what the cabin was so cozy that Persis often dreamed that she was living in it.

This room was not small, and it seemed twice as big as it was because there were two long mirrors. Just now everything within its walls seemed to be made of silk, a thing that always happened just as the sun made ready to drop behind the pines across the river. The light made the peacocks and flowers on the chintz the same faint pink as the wood of the tables and chairs and

gave everything the same silken texture. Persis had plenty of time to notice this, for she was a wise child about knowing when to talk and when to keep still; her father often told her so.

At last he was ready to include her. 'What do you think I've brought you, young lady?' he asked when his bags had come from the station.

'Tell me!' He always knew what would please her tremendously.

From its wrapping of soft leather he took a silver bowl, a little bowl hardly larger than a child's porringer, and gave it to Persis. 'How do you like it?'

She held the treasure on the tips of her fingers, turning it slowly around to see all sides, for there was no repetition of the pattern. It was engraved with deer and fawns and trees no higher than the animals, with precious stones for fruit, some of it on the trees and some fallen on the ground. She was too interested to speak.

'I got the thing from an Englishman stranded in Lisbon. He thought that an interest in a tea plantation in Ceylon would be of more use to him than an empty bowl.'

'Isn't it lovely!' Mrs. Illott took it from Persis to look at it more closely. 'How could he sell it?'

'Oh, it wasn't a family thing; he picked it up in India somewhere. And he didn't sell it, actually. That is, we didn't say so, although we both knew he wasn't likely to see it again. I told him that I'd bring the bowl home to Persis and he could let us know when he made his fortune. He was in love with that piece of silver and it was all he saved out of a typhoon. He lost everything, even an arm after the surgeon got hold of him.'

'You helped him!' Persis said. 'I know! You were good to him.'

'Well, what's a one-armed man going to do? He was sick and he hadn't a penny.'

He leaned towards her mother as he spoke, to take the bowl, and as his hand touched hers Persis saw that again they

had forgotten her. 'I'll go and feed the Hobby Horse while you are talking.' She knew they did not hear her. Her pony made a good excuse, but she hadn't needed any.

### III

Persis had grown older in the last year and now she understood some of the reasons why supper seemed so different to-night. Mother cared about the way supper was served, while Father was interested in how the food was cooked. Yet that was hardly the important difference to Persis. Mother was so sweet and gentle that she made emphatic persons seem more self-assertive than they were. Father forgot, too, that he was not at sea where he ruled nothing but men. It might be harmless to swear at cabin boys, but it made Nellie Brice very nervous. Mother did not like to have him do it, though she didn't say that right out; she withdrew into silent disapproval. That was no way to get Father to stop whatever he was doing. Why hadn't Mother learned that he enjoyed being commanded by her, that it made him angry to see her suffer uncomplainingly? Why couldn't Mother learn that to Father silence seemed the worst kind of complaining?

And what was Father saying, really? Things that were said on purpose to annoy Mother, Persis could see that, although why they had that effect Persis did not know. Perhaps they were not as mild as they sounded. She knew most of the words, but by the time Nellie Brice brought the crackers and cheese the child realized that she did not understand anything that he was saying. Nellie Brice's face was scarlet, and although Father was pretending to pay no attention to her, he was enjoying her blushes. Mother did not blush. Her face was white. Persis wished that she knew what it was all about, but pride and a dreadful suspicion prevented her asking questions or calling attention to herself in any way.



Her father ignored her presence. But it seemed that he was thinking along one of the lines that her mind had traveled, for at last he leaned back in his chair, looking at her mother critically. 'The girls in Lisbon aren't much like you. They'd show you how to treat me — a slap for every word they don't like, a slap and a dozen kisses. It's color a man wants when he's ashore, color and laughter and a little "come hither."'

Persis was watching her mother closely. In the beginning, supper had been gay, and Father had brought some special wine that Mother appreciated; while they talked about it everything was smooth and pleasant. Mother had laughed at Father at first, and then she had begun to hide her eyes, and then she had grown pale, and now she made no pretense of eating. Father was going too far, there was no doubt about that.

The silence infuriated him. He blurted out the thing that always, while Persis was there at least, had been unspoken. 'Why don't you tell me to behave? What are you afraid of, you little fool?'

It was then that Persis knew on which side she must stand. She turned on her father with a voice as imperious as his own. 'Don't you dare to speak to my mother like that!'

Their eyes met, blue, both pairs, and Persis knew that hers held the same cold glint of determination that shone in his.

Captain Illott looked at his daughter curiously for a minute. Then he burst into a roar of laughter.

His voice was all but soundless against the thud of her heart. Everything seemed unreal, as though her mind were lifted out of her head, to float in space above her chair, surveying its former body and the wreck of her happiness.

She dashed towards the door. She was going to cry, but not until she was safely out of sight and hearing.

'Here, here! Where are you going? I want you.'

She pulled herself together. 'I don't

want you! You are hateful!' And then she slammed the heavy dining-room door.

#### IV

A night's sleep did not bring her peace. When she woke she was thinking about her father and mother. He exacted such strict obedience from other people, why couldn't he please Mother by making himself more nearly what she wanted him to be during the short time that he was at home?

Persis had breakfast alone, instead of with her mother, and that helped to make the day seem more bleak. She felt utterly miserable. Where was Mother? She hadn't seen her, hadn't heard her voice. Persis could think of nothing to do, although it was Saturday, nothing better than sitting in the library window, reading, and hardly knowing what book she held. It was Andersen, and it was open at a page that said, 'The eldest princess was now fifteen, and was allowed to rise up to the surface of the sea . . . mermaids have no tears and therefore suffer all the more.'

Her best friends, Bill and Foddy Guest, went by, shouting as they passed her gate. She knew where they were going — to fish off the Bell Rock, because their mother forgot to tell them not to go there when she went to visit her sister in Boston. Some persons thought that the Bell Rock wasn't a safe place, but it really wasn't dangerous if you watched the tide.

Yesterday Persis had intended to go with them, if she could get away without her mother's asking where she was going; if Mother could be satisfied with the answer, 'To the rocks' and didn't ask which rocks. She hoped to show that a girl could bring in cod where boys caught cunners, but last night had spoiled everything, taken away every bit of interest in fishing or going up-river.

Passing by the library door, her mother saw her and came into the room.

'I thought I heard the Guests calling you. Why aren't you on your way down to the rocks? There must be splendid surf. Haven't you heard it?'

'I didn't feel like going.'

Mrs. Illott dropped on her knees, pushed the book aside and put her arms around the girl as if she were a baby again. 'Little Persis, do you love me?'

'Oh, yes, yes!'

It was only then that the child knew that her mother understood anything of what she was feeling. Both of them were horribly lonely and disappointed. But neither was willing to break the reserve of silence that perhaps made their trouble easier to bear. Words were better unspoken, as long as they both knew.

'Will you do something for me? Pick violets for the table?'

She looked at Persis and smiled. And Persis was gone in an instant, running through the kitchen garden to the grass at the edge of the brook between the house and the orchard, where the violets grew rank. It was cheering, to be doing something for Mother. She worked industriously, slowly getting a grip on herself. Sitting cross-legged in the grass, she gathered little piles of violets into one heavenly cabbage head of purple pricked with points of gold, and took it, a double handful, into the dining room. After she had put the flowers into a glass bowl and had sufficiently admired the thin delicacy of pale green stems shining in the water, she felt much better. For another thing, to make the day more comfortable, Captain Ward had come to call on Father. She could hear them talking in the library, and the growl of their deep voices sounded commonplace and natural.

Captain Ward stayed to dinner, and that was pleasant, too. Persis decided that the world was right again. After dinner she would go to find Bill and Foddy, or perhaps take the boat upriver. She would ask her father, not her mother. He was sure to say yes, because he thought the river was as safe as houses,

and so it was. Mother never trusted anything that had to do with the water.

But after Captain Ward had gone home to take his afternoon nap she could not find her father alone. He had gone upstairs to the sitting room with her mother, and there he sat talking almost as steadily as if he were reading aloud. Finally Persis decided to go up and ask them both together. She would not mention the Bell Rock, for that would be useless with her mother there, but surely they would let her go upriver. She could handle that rowboat as well as any boy in Underhill, and what if there was a dam? It was away around the lower bend, and she could keep her promise not to go anywhere near it. She wanted to go up the river, not down.

But when she started upstairs she did not go all the way. The tones of her father's voice rumbling overhead made the air heavy. It wasn't just ordinary conversation that she could interrupt for a minute. On the landing she turned back and took the words she had heard out of doors to churn them over in her mind.

'What makes you so squeamish?' she had heard. 'You're nothing but an old maid, a prudish old maid. I'm not going to have Persis growing up like you, I can tell you. I should think that being married to me would have done something for you, but it hasn't.'

He had stopped talking for a second and Persis had started up a higher step or two, and then he began again. He seemed to be following Mother into her room. Louder than ever he shouted, 'Go out while you change your dress? My God, woman!'

He had called Mother a *woman*, that horrid word that was used only in speaking of common people. That was dreadful of him. He shouldn't have done it. Persis hadn't minded his swearing, for that was no more than a quick expression of annoyance, but this was insulting.

She wandered up to her carpenter's shop in the barn chamber. It was forbidden to go anywhere outside the yard without permission from a parent.

She was making a dovecote, to stand on a pole in the barnyard. But to-day nothing went well. She could not saw straight, and the best plane gouged instead of working smoothly. In disgust she put the tools away and went to look out of the window.

There was something to be seen out of the window. The painters were working on the ell of Mrs. Dodge's house, next door. They were just below the eaves.

It was a wonderful place to paint, broad and high and without windows on that side of the house. It was going to be white again, exactly as always. Where the false windows were, the blinds had been taken away and the places where they had been were dirty; rain must do a lot of good, washing. There ought to be a better view of the painters from Mother's sitting room, and Persis regretted that her father was no longer a little boy whose attention would be drawn away from Mother by his interest in workmen. The house was too far from the barn for ordinary voices to carry, but she had no doubt that he was still talking.

## V

All at once she heard him. It came like a note of thunder and turned her cold. She twisted stiffly towards the windows of the sitting room, and she saw him pull open the double doors of the French windows.

Something white and lovely gleamed in the dusk beyond the threshold, and with the force of an entering gust of wind Captain Illott went towards it. It was a statue, tall and straight and slim. Where did it come from? It moved, and Persis heard her mother cry out, 'No!'

The painters had stopped work to look, staring with all their eyes. They

and Persis were on almost the same level, a little below the balcony, and they seemed to be looking up at a stage in a theatre.

The painters were leaning back to see better, anchored on their horizontal ladder by their legs that dangled over the edge towards the Dodge house. Drops of white made a string of graduated beads that fell from one of the wide brushes.

'I'll give you something to blush for!' That was her father, shouting. Persis could see his lips move, but it didn't sound like his voice.

An instant later he stepped through the French window. Held fast by his brown-weathered hand around her arm, with him came a woman. The spring breeze blew against the folds of thin scarf that covered her; she was like a statue of a goddess high in a niche of a temple.

Mother? Mother! The world turned black; it became a roaring confusion of shame and anger.

'Here, men!'—as though he were calling to dogs. 'Look this way!'

The men were looking already, Persis knew that, but she turned her eyes towards them when she heard her father's order. Her neck was strangely stiff, as if she were growing petrified, but the rest of her was trembling.

Deliberately the painters moved around on the ladder until their backs were squarely towards the balcony. They dipped brushes into paint pails and slapped, slapped, against the clapboards. They did not speak or look at each other.

'Turn this way, I tell you!'

Slap, slap, the new white showed moist and even beneath the firm brush strokes.

Persis closed her eyes. Her father might shoot the men and kill them both, as he shot the two leaders of the mutiny that time in Calcutta.

In his rage he must have forgotten everything but the painters, for when

Persis opened her eyes again he was alone on the balcony.

She hardly knew that she had moved, but at last she found that she was under the workbench, among the shavings, covered, head and all, with an old corduroy coat that she kept in the barn for cold days.

She slept and wakened. The Town Hall clock struck four. Now she knew what she intended to do. She would go away and take her mother with her, and never see her father again.

A step sounded on the loose boards downstairs; it was her father, she knew without seeing him. She had been cramped and chilly and lonely, but her father's nearness sent burning hot anger to make her alert and furiously alive again.

He was coming upstairs. Persis drew herself into an inconspicuous ball and put her fingers in her ears. She would not speak to him and she prayed never to hear his voice. To-night, when it was dark, she and her mother would go away, and if her mother wouldn't go, Persis was going alone.

Her attempt at hiding was a failure, for he saw her at once, and she could hear him distinctly. 'What in the name of common sense are you doing here? If you want to lie down, why don't you go to bed? Your mother thought that you had gone upriver.'

He pulled the coat away and she turned her back on him.

'Won't speak, eh? So I'm a bad man? I suppose you think you're going to stay out here until I go to sea again!' He stamped his foot as he laughed, and Persis saw a ray of sunshine fill with cloudy dust.

She wished that he would go and leave her alone, but instead he stopped to look out of the window.

It was very still. Down in his stall the Hobby Horse moved about. Probably he couldn't understand why she hadn't put him out in the paddock if she wasn't going to use him this

afternoon. To-day was hard on everybody.

It was so still that Persis heard steps running along Main Street, heard them coming down the River Road, heard the front gate click. The church bells began to ring. What could that mean? Not a fire, because the bell on the Town Hall rang for a fire.

A man's voice called, 'Cap'n Illott! Cap'n Illott!' Whoever it was hadn't waited to ring the doorbell; he was standing outside and shouting.

'What is it, man?' Her father had shoved up the window.

'Them Guest boys is drowning, off the Bell Rock!' Persis thought she recognized the voice of one of the sailors on *Sea Flower*.

She scrambled from under the workbench, but her father was gone already.

'Wait for me!' she called, but while she was on the stairway she saw him snatch a coil of rope from below the hayloft, saw him ride out of the barn on Soldier without stopping to saddle him.

A stream of running men and boys and girls and women was pouring down the River Road towards the rocks. People scattered to left and right as Soldier came out of the driveway.

Persis scuttled across the lawn to the house, wishing she could be invisible. She did not want to see her mother, but it would be best to get that over at once.

But she was hardly indoors before Mrs. Guest's Maggie came, bursting into the house without knocking. She ran down the hall, calling, 'Mrs. Illott!'

'Yes, Maggie.' And Persis saw her mother coming down the stairs. She looked just as usual.

The tears were streaming down Maggie's cheeks and her mouth was working frightfully. 'Mrs. Illott! You'll come, won't you? You'll tell them what to do when they brings them . . . My boys! Whatever will their mother do?'

'Yes, Maggie, I'll come. Persis, go and harness Hobby.'

## VI

And so Persis and her mother and Maggie went racing down the Sea Road behind the Hobby Horse. Maggie's hands covered her face. 'Have mercy on us,' she prayed, saying the same words over and over again with mumblings in between that Persis could not quite hear.

Louder and louder came the thunder of a heavy surf, the booming of avalanches of water; then, as they came nearer to the shore, Persis could hear the sharp rattle of retreating waves on the pebble beaches. The fountain of white from the Blowing Cave lifted itself above the horizon and sank and showed again.

Everybody was down on the flat reach of rock below the level of grass and bayberry. All were drenched with spray.

Beyond was the Bell Rock, its smooth sides streaming white. It looked as if milk were being poured over it. And around it were whirlpools where the rising tide fought the backwash of thousands of tons of water flung back from the face of the cliff.

Across the top of the Bell ran the curious flat narrow slab of granite, the rafter from which the Bell hung, and clinging to this crossbar were the two boys. They looked very small. Persis could hardly believe they were so little. She had supposed that she and Foddy were the same size; they had measured themselves. But she couldn't be as small as either of those two little children. Now they swung like boats at anchor, as the water rose beneath them, now they slapped against the Bell as the ebbing wave sucked them down.

Nobody could reach them. No boat could live a minute so near the rocks, and no man could swim; he would be like a lost marker from a lobster pot, tossed and swirling. And yet each wave came higher; before the turn of the tide the water would be four feet deep over the Bell.

It was impossible to hear the boys' voices through the roar of the sea. Someone must have seen them and run with the alarm.

Persis saw her father step to the edge of the shelf of rock. The rope was around his waist. He was going to try to get out there! Three would be drowned, not two. But she never questioned the need of his going. Clutching the dashboard, she leaned forward to watch.

Two men followed him, one of them the sailor, and they let the rope play out until its curve hung far down in the water. They all were in the surf; the waves covered them, whenever a wave came past. And then a great comber rolled in, a ninth wave, and while the abyss was still whirling green and silver Captain Illott jumped, down to the ridge of rock that began to show its backbone as his feet struck it. During the instant that the rock was bare he ran its length, out to the Bell.

Another wave was coming and he dropped flat to hold fast. Another wave towered higher and higher, gathering the water from the bottom; its white crest feathered and tumbled forward upon him.

When it had passed, he sprang for the Bell's rafter. He lashed the rope to the Bell, untied it from around his waist.

'Don't do that!' shouted Persis. Now, if the waves washed him off the rocks, he would be gone forever. 'Don't!' But no one heard her.

Clinging to the rope with one hand, he was coming back with Bill. Foddy, older and stronger, was helping himself, hand over hand. It was no harder to hang on to the rope than on to the Bell.

First Bill was carried up to safety. The sailor took the boy from Captain Illott and threw him high, and someone caught him out of the water and brought him up to dry land. Then they helped Foddy. And, last, Persis saw her father scrambling out of the way of a great wave that reared against the cliff.

No one else dared, no one else could



have done it. Her father, the bravest man, the man who could do anything! To be like him, to know what had to be done, always! If only she could be halfway like him! Then, heavy and suffocating as one of the giant waves, the early afternoon swept down upon her triumphant gloating.

It changed her into someone she never had been until to-day, someone shamefaced, who wanted to keep out of sight. It was only then that Persis became aware that she was alone in the cart. She knew that Maggie had gone, but after that she had been intent on what was happening. Where was Mother? Where? They two must stay together. Her mother needed her.

It took real searching before the girl's eyes found what they were looking for; it didn't seem possible that Mother could be down there in the crowd, standing with people as if this had been an ordinary afternoon. Practically every inhabitant of Underhill was as near the cliff edge as it was possible to be, and it took a while for Persis to push her way through, even though each person made way for her as soon as he saw who was trying to get past him.

'Mother, darling,' she said, and took her hand, and was surprised to see that her mother hardly knew she had come.

The men were climbing up from the rocks. Maggie already had taken Bill in her arms and carried him back to where warm blankets were ready by a fire of driftwood. The sailor boosted Foddy up the last steep step, and then

he and the other sea-soaked men followed to the fire. The crowd went with them.

The last one to come was Captain Illott. As though it were a ship that he was leaving, he waited until his men were safe, and when he reached the top he stayed where he stood. The water, running from his soaked hair, dripped from his heavy eyebrows. He blinked it away and looked into his wife's eyes. 'Ready to come home?' he asked her.

Persis watched the color come into her mother's face, saw her hold out her hands. Captain Illott pulled her close to him and she held him tight, as Persis would have done. The salt water in his wet sleeves was marking the green of Mother's best afternoon taffeta with widening streaks of black as his arms pressed against her shoulders.

Mother had forgiven him? What had she felt, as he went down under the waves? And if Mother could take him back, could Persis? Father was so brave; he was a hero, as great as the men she loved to read about in stories of knights. And he was so kind, really. Didn't that make him more unforgivable when he was — awful? But Persis loved him so! She couldn't live without him.

Her father and mother did not see her, although she was standing with them at the edge of the cliff. They did not say good-bye or look at her when they went away. She watched them go across the turf, on their way to the cart, saw them drive towards the road, jouncing over the short grass. But she was glad to be alone.

# GIDEON

BY JOSEPH O'KANE FOSTER

## I

'PA,' said Gideon's youngest brat plaintively, her small wide feet squirming in the scorching soil. She was the shyest of five scrawny girls in dirty gingham whose gnawing tummies Gideon could never quite satisfy.

Far off on the desert-brown horizon were seven feeble cyclones swirling their way across the hot blue Kansas sky. Twisters, Gideon called them. They were harmless gusts of wind that never more than stirred the dust in the road and then moved on across the neighbor's arid fields. You could see them for miles lazing along the landscape, their faint yellow funnels towering sometimes a thousand feet in the air. But they weren't dust. Dust claimed the sky. It rolled in like a glinting brown fog and left strange dunes drifted all over the land.

'Well, I'll be damned,' said Gideon. 'First time I ever did see seven twisters! What d'ya want, child?'

Gideon was always wondering sacrilegiously about the earth or new insects or the wind. Even dust was still a phenomenon to Gideon. After thirty years of farming, he still felt dust was *his* responsibility. Dust was an evil part of his own nature. He had long philosophical harangues with himself on the subject of the sacredness of the soil.

Gideon himself was small and ornery, with a shrewd white face that knew every danger of the land from grasshopper plagues and scurvy to the bank's foreclosing on one's mortgage. They

were farm routines to Gideon. He was a survivor of ten generations of pastoral failures. But, my God, how he loved farming! It was the damndest way to make a living.

'Pa,' confided the child at last, 'there's a man with Ma again in the bedroom.'

Gideon slowly considered her words; then asked, 'What for heighth?'

The child timidly did not answer. She seemed fascinated by her father's rage.

'I know,' decided Gideon at last. 'It's that lappus again what sells kittles. But she's fixin' to get kilt if I find her side and side of him.'

Gideon carefully unhitched the horse and left the plough tipped in the dry earth and started toward his shack, a quarter of a mile off in the vibrant noon heat. The child came after him, jumping from furrow to hot furrow with her frightened bare feet.

Gideon's farm was 160 acres. It had been fenced, but he had never been able to get through a winter without burning at least some of his fence posts. Long ago he had traded the barbed wire for a broken-down saddle to get three of his kids to school in. His silo had rotted at the base and sheered over into a Leaning Tower of Pisa. After a skunk went through his chicken coop he had only five hens left and no money to buy a rooster. On occasion he could get his 1923 Model T to working half-heartedly, and then he would drive over ten miles

to the county seat and argue with the agricultural agent about Conservation. But the last time he had had to abandon the car in the square and return home on foot. Someone had finally bushwhacked his hayrake. Eight sails of his windmill were gone. And the farm had no gates. But something deeper gripped Gideon than the general aspects of his land — as it does all farmers. Hence the more his domain ran down, the closer did Gideon come to the meaning of life.

At the door of the shack Gideon cautioned the child to be quiet, and after meticulously shooing the flies off the screen he entered the kitchen, where his wife's preserves were still sweetly simmering, and then went into his own bedroom.

'They said in town all along you was the one,' said Gideon, belting the man across the room. 'But I was onwilling to believe 'em.'

When the man had picked himself up Gideon belted him again, and with him down crashed the oval mirror on the back of Gideon's dresser.

'Now git,' said Gideon, coiled like a hyena, and he crowded the terrified man out of the house.

'M' britches!' screamed the poor devil in the chicken yard.

A little group of Gideon's kids stood meekly looking on.

'Y' didn't need no britches half an hour ago — y' don't need none now.'

And Gideon flung a rusty can of red geraniums at the fellow and waited until he was a white speck far down the dusty road.

Between the porch and the bedroom again Gideon's soul writhed in agony. He felt sick to his stomach with shame. It seemed he wanted to die. He was weak all over with ignominy.

'You too!' said Gideon, surprised the forces within him had come to their own cruel decision. 'You never was nearer death,' he said at last. 'Now git!'

And, without complaining, Gideon's wife followed her lover down the dusty

road. Behind, her little group of children remained speechless and horrified.

'Now make some potatoes,' said Gideon, jarring them all to life. He couldn't quite understand the situation himself except by doing something about the place. 'Keep movin'' was his only motto in this world.

But all during the meal Gideon felt he wanted to go into the bedroom and cry; instead he remarked that the 'flavior' of the stewed apricots was none too good and he whacked Minnie for taking too much molasses. 'Your eyes are bigger than your stomach.' But it would be hell around the place without a woman, and he dumbly wondered if he could have maintained his 'peerogative' and still not kicked her out. 'She'll end up a chippy for fair. I'm through with her like I would be reench water,' he swore aloud. But the children remained respectfully silent.

## II

Toward three o'clock a great red dust cloud rolled slowly in from the southwest — a vast, eternal, fulminating curtain. It became dark as twilight about the barn, and Gideon and the children, with rags over their faces and lard in their nostrils, ran everywhere doing the last-minute chores before it was too late.

It was the confusion the wind always brought that Gideon hated. It made him forget where he was going. Often he would stand five minutes opening a door. It sucked the pride right out of him. And finally they would all give up and go into the house, where there were already ripples on the kitchen floor. And the girls would spray a sheet before the door with coal oil and paste up the windows with wrapping paper, and Gideon would remark, 'If my handwriting was *any* good, I'd sure post a letter to the Chamber of Commerce this time.'

By ten o'clock the girls were all asleep. 'She didn't need to do that to me and the kids,' he said solemnly as he blew the lamp out. And then he realized he had

been giving his wife the benefit of the argument all through his anger, and he tumbled into his dusty bed vindicated yet forlorn.

But early the next morning the sun was shining in all its glory, as Gideon knew it would be. A promising piece of Gideon's rye had been destroyed by driftings. There were dusty hummocks all over the quiet lunar landscape. High overhead a thousand chattering black-birds fled eastward. The sand had scoured all Gideon's windows opaque and white.

As he finished harnessing his horse Gideon heard his oldest daughter exclaim: 'Pa, our mulberry bush is gone.'

'It sure looks like go-back land this morning,' said Gideon, driving off to the potato patch he still had confidence in. 'If it rains just a little weeny-meany bit, I'll sow my winter wheat as usual, but the corn will take fire again if this heat keeps up. I don't know what it is that keeps me on this farm.' Some foolhardy force, he knew, disguised as his pride in the land.

But things got no better, and Gideon went everywhere talking with himself about the Times. Deep within him he felt a sense of guilt about the storms. Some ancient conscience — some belief that nature in her vilest modes was righteous — kept him respectful in his thoughts. His complaint seemed to bind him ever closer to his land.

Soon the underground water levels lowered beyond reach. The wells dried out. The streams dwindled and the winds stank of dead fish in the river bottoms. Drinking water could only be fetched from miles away. The sands advanced slowly, surely, pointlessly. A great curved dune constructed itself graciously around Gideon's little shack.

'I was under the delusion this was a flat state,' said Gideon, and he walked in to town to spend the day talking to the county agent.

In June the apples commenced to fall from the trees. The potatoes were the

size of marbles. Corn turned to fodder on the stalk. And the bees, flowerless, ate their own hives. The schools closed, and sand slowly flooded in and washed away the seats. Men were blue from undernourishment and turned out their cattle to shift for themselves.

Soon the beautiful dune surrounding Gideon's shack was twice as high as his tar-paper eaves. It moulded and remoulded itself elegantly each day. It seemed to gather the sand from Gideon's whole farm and leave his land hard and dry.

And Gideon spent more and more time in the dusty town now, talking and disputing with friends. It seemed that destruction gave him a final insight into life on earth. And he talked and talked cynically in crude philosophical terms. 'I don't know the exact reason for life,' he'd say, 'but there's a bug under the chip somewhere,' he'd vow. 'Why are we here and why do we stay here? It would take a whole compoodle of professors to tell us that.' But the other farmers only shrugged their shoulders and laid it all to the wind. And Gideon trudged back home to sit and brood among his gray-skinned, crying daughters.

When Gideon had counted the one hundred and sixty-ninth storm of the summer, he realized the year was wasted. His pastures and fields were dead. It seemed the hummocked land itself cried out to Gideon for an answer to life he could not give.

'This wind has been blowin' on and off for fifteen thousand years. I 'spect it's got more right to the land than we have,' but that truth didn't satisfy him. He still had to shovel a path through the sand to his barn.

Every day now from habit he would go out and plough the dust. Houses everywhere around him were drifting away. Ghost farms dotted the wan white landscape. The sun was a purple ball in the noon-night sky.

'It's the radio that does it,' thought

Gideon, 'or maybe there ain't no reason.' That thought was overwhelming — it reached so far beyond his conception of himself as a man.

He decided at last it was something 'internal' that kept him on the land, and he tried to say as little as possible about it in the dusty wooden town; but occasionally he would forget himself and speak of the 'nonsense of creation,' and other words that seemed to come to him from nowhere. But the men only laughed. Everyone got hysterical with the dust.

So Gideon went on home again, where the land took his mighty turmoil seriously. His head ached perpetually. His throat was like sandpaper. His children were sick. The clock stopped. The cow refused at last to eat its gritty fodder. Jack rabbits sneezed and sneezed themselves to death under his very windows. And Gideon himself could only lie upon his dusty bed and think.

But behind him rose the graceful sand dune, spending itself selfishly in eerie streamers from its lofty ridge.

### III

When spring came and the Red Cross workers broke into Gideon's shack, they found him scarcely human. One of his daughters had died of dust pneumonia. There was barely half a sack of spuds left, and Gideon had sold his bed to a junkman for fifty cents. Sand had slowly filled his bedroom, but somehow all but Minnie had survived the winter huddled on the kitchen floor.

'What does the Sekeetary of Agree-culture say about the weather now?' laughed Gideon.

And even more cheerfully: 'What are the chances of wheat this year? Or ain't there no needcessity for wheat any more?'

But these were the jibes of hardly a man.

And Gideon again became human. Land specialists came and showed him

how to plough in contours. The Red Cross gave him seed. The government bought his worthless cow. Surveys were made and contracts signed to limit acreage. Hillsides were reforested, dams built. Lazy farmers were forced to plough. All Kansas was contoured and terraced artfully.

And at last experts arrived to flatten out Gideon's favorite sand dune. It was nice, yet hard to see it go.

Gideon was a good farmer. He averaged four bushels more per acre than any man in the county. He rented a tractor and worked all day and all night, one hundred and twenty hours on end. In five days he had terraced one hundred acres, all the government allowed.

He selected carefully the reddest, hardest wheat seed and commenced sowing in September — six pecks of seed to the acre. And immediately the grain began to germinate and throw out its green whorls of temporary roots — a hundred acres of tender wheat from Gideon's horny hand.

And then began the long dormant period of almost half a year. Rains came and came again. Winter was a miracle of snow. April saw the spikes again push through the soil. June saw a wilderness of bearded greenness. July was a triumph of golden yellow. And God was good to Gideon, for the rusts and pests were few that year.

'It's sure enough unanimous this time,' he said grimly.

Gideon cut, raked, piled, and 'thrashed' his wheat. Long into the summer twilight the thresher chuffed its throaty song. Gideon needed more barns, more bins than ever before. Even his house was full of wheat. Thirty bushels to the acre. Three thousand bushels of grain were his reward.

And then Gideon sat down and figured: 'Ploughing cost me a dollar an acre. Harrowing thirty cents. Interest and my rent seven-fifty. Harvesting three dollars.'

And while the children waited Gideon



added and readded his numbers a dozen times.

'It don't make sense,' said Gideon finally. 'According to that, it's cost me fifty-four and nine-tenths cents a bushel already,' and he put on his blue jumper and walked in to town to see the county agent.

'What's wheat, pardner?'

The county agent, a calm scientific man in gold spectacles who had learned to multiply and divide life in college except when the wind blew or the rains were capricious, accommodately told him: 'Sixty cents at the mill.'

'Listen,' screamed Gideon, 'I spent fifty-five cents a bushel rearin' that wheat! It's like keeping your cow alive with her own milk. It don't make sense. According to that I've earned less than fifty cents a day for a year.'

'It'll go up a little by Christmas,' consoled the county agent.

'Damn you!' swore Gideon, and he went back home again.

All the misery of the Drought seemed to return to Gideon. He was alternately practical and depressed. He schemed and brooded constantly. The battle seemed to be between his love and his hatred of the land.

The mill now offered Gideon sixty-one cents. He laughed at that. A jobber from Kansas City offered him sixty-three, but Gideon refused. The commission, he knew, would be an extra 5 per cent.

'That's like guessin' at half and multiplying by two,' sneered Gideon. 'Wouldn't even pay for the gunny sacks.'

Wheat went to fifty-eight in Omaha, and Gideon became alarmed. He knew wheat kept on the farm more than a year was unmillable. Rats fattened on it, and when weevils got through with a bin only the shells were left.

He again drove in to the local elevator and waited his turn at the unloading platform.

'How much you offering me for this load?' he said shrewdly.

'Can't do no better than trade you a ton of coal this morning,' said the weigher. Coal was four dollars a ton.

'God,' said Gideon, and he again drove off without closing a deal. 'I can shovel it into the stove myself at that rate.'

Gideon was seen everywhere now about the county with the same load of wheat. Everywhere he talked fervently to anyone who would listen to him: 'It's going to be a race now to sell before Argenteena starts cluttering up the market.' He knew wheat generated heat easily. And, when it did, it spoiled. 'Or we could ship it up the St. Lawrence to Europe and beat the dagos at their own game,' he suggested. But he received no reply.

In the fall wheat went to fifty-five cents a bushel, and Gideon's distracted mind decided to drive a wagonload fifty miles away to Oklahoma. But he was turned back at the state line. There was an interstate tax he couldn't pay. And, defeated again, he retired to the security of his own farm to think.

Three thousand bushels of wheat!

'It was sand that was bothering me in my kitchen last year, and this year it's sawdust.' He was violent with hatred.

In September he cautiously began a new tack: 'I don't see nothin' for us but a world war. It's right at twenty years now since we had a good war.'

It began as a mere joke, — a sarcastic renunciation of all hope, — but soon Gideon's whole mind was looking forward to the possibilities of a war.

'I'll tell you: Europe's wobblejawed with their own condition. Otherwise they wouldn't be doin' all that negotiating in Munich and Paris. If they'd just run slap-dab into a war before Christmas, wheat would be a dollar a bushel. We got enough wheat now in our elevators to dry up the Atlantic Ocean and walk across with the rest. You watch: one word will bring on another and finally they'll mix. We've just got to have a war.'

Every day now Gideon carefully loaded his wagon with wheat sacks and drove slowly in to town to spend the day talking about the war — which by some sleight of his fancy was already in progress.

Wheat was lower that fall than it had been in three hundred years. No one in all of Kansas would even make a bid. And the farmers around town took to joking Gideon as a pastime. They cruelly made him the scapegoat for the entire catastrophe.

‘Gid, what you gonna do after this here war of yours in Europe is over?’

Gideon smiled. ‘Give me a thousand sod busters and fifty ton of seed and I’ll sprout wheat even in Berlin.’

It all became fantastic now, a travesty neither Gideon nor the men could resist enlarging. Wheat was war in everyone’s mind. And Gideon was slightly loony with his own idea.

But there was no war in Europe, and around five one evening, just as Gideon was preparing for the long drive back to the farm, some startling news was telegraphed to town. A speculator a thousand miles away in Chicago with 18,000,000 shares had gone broke, and the very wheat Gideon was sitting on dropped to forty cents a bushel.

‘G’yap,’ said Gideon when he heard that. It all came to him now as a vision or an ugly annunciation. There wasn’t any war. There wasn’t going to be any market for wheat. Nor was he slightly crazy as he had half playfully, half seriously pretended to be. He was a ruined man foolishly guarding with his life and soul two hundred thousand pounds of worthless grain. He knew all that quite suddenly and solemnly. And he knew what he was going to do.

He drove slowly through his own pasture in the pale Kansas twilight and then on into the barnyard, where a three-

legged cur affectionately wagged its yellow tail.

Gideon tied the reins to the springs of the seat and then called to his children:—

‘Come out!’

Four white-faced children appeared one by one in the yard. They formed a sorry little group.

Silently they watched Gideon go into the kitchen, where he stayed only a short while. When he reappeared there was soft smoke in his wake.

‘Pa!’ said the oldest.

And Gideon went quickly now from barn to barn with his oilcan, sprinkling oil recklessly over the dry sand-scoured boards of his farm buildings.

‘Pa!’

The chicken house, the silo, the machine shed, the granaries — all were slowly and carefully ignited by Gideon’s serious hand. One by one the dry structures took fire.

‘Pa!’

But when the last outhouse added its flames to the lofty turbulence flowering in the sky — twenty miles away could be seen Gideon’s golden cyclone — a new sensation, a new horror, appeared in Gideon, one that even in his wickedness he could not resist. And in obedience he dropped to his knees before the blinding holocaust and said:—

‘O Lord, I see great plains of wheat. I see great States of barley. I see great Continents of cattle. I see great epochs of pine. I see great herds of sheep in Siberia. I see commerce with India and Africa. I see great warehouses of corn. I see harvests and harvests. . . . I see men happy.’

Two hours later farmers from all over the county came to help put out the great fire. But they found nothing of Gideon or his children.

# MY UNCLE HORACE

BY GEORGE H. FREITAG

THERE were so many things my Uncle Horace could do well that hardly anyone else was able to stay in business in Junction Center.

Uncle Horace could make tables, fix radios, repair shoes, climb flagpoles, sing with an orchestra, press suits, clean wallpaper, build houses, and compose music. He was just about the most important man in his city, but the job he worked at to earn a living was painting signs. He could paint high signs, small signs, green signs, pink signs, and yellow signs. He had a little shop of his own on Woodland Street, out of the high-rent district, and whenever he had a sign to paint which would net him even two cents over the price of the streetcar fare he would take the streetcar.

All day long you could see him riding or walking, depending upon the price of the sign he was delivering. He whistled and sang along the way, his trousers smeared with all the colors of the rainbow, his hair coming down over his dreamy blue eyes, and his slight stature showing years of patience and toil. But my uncle was not a happy man, and his sadness was often reflected in the songs he sang and in the signs he painted.

One day my mother asked him why he was unhappy. 'You have a fine little shop, you have a good trade, you are making a decent living, so why aren't you happy?' she asked.

'Well,' said my Uncle Horace, his long, artistic hands folded in front of him, 'I want to be an artist, not a sign painter, not a radio fixer not a flagpole

sitter or anything. I want to be an artist and paint beautiful things, such as grapes and peaches and cows. I — I want to be hung in the galleries.'

'That,' my mother said to him, 'is another kind of talent. You must be content to paint letters for a living, to have your own shop, to go and come as you please.'

But my Uncle Horace would have nothing more to say, and would go back to his little shop and begin making all kinds of letters, slinging paint right and left, showing his unhappiness.

Now the trouble was that whenever my Uncle Horace began a painting with grapes and peaches and cows in it he had to lay it aside in favor of the commercial work which came in. It spoiled the whole business, because every time he started out on one of his fine paintings he would be interrupted and then his whole day was ruined. So in reality you couldn't blame him for being unhappy.

One morning just as the beautiful sun was rising over the County Workhouse, which was also out of the high-rent district, my Uncle Horace came running down the street toward his little shop. It was evident that the creative spark was burning within him. There was a sort of frantic light in his dreamy blue eyes, and the way his hair blew in the stiff morning breeze was just the way it should have blown to be the kind of hair great artists have. It was evident that in the back of his fertile mind there was beginning to grow a fine painting, a thing of magnificence.

When he arrived at his little shop he took all of the sign orders from the spindle on his desk and put them in a drawer so he wouldn't be disturbed by their presence. Then he locked his door and set to work on the canvas. As was customary, the painting began to be peaches, grapes, apples, sweet corn, radishes, peas, beans, carrots, cabbages, and turnips, and in the background, which was a delicate shade of red, was a beautiful black cow with golden horns. It was indeed a masterpiece, and my Uncle Horace danced with joy and pride. In a few brief hours he had changed from the unhappiest to the happiest man in Junction Center.

'I've done it! I've done it!' he screamed as he pranced around the little shop. 'Now I shall be hung in the Municipal Art Gallery! Now I am an artist. Gracious day!'

By this time it was midafternoon and my uncle became very hungry. He did not want to go out and eat a meal because such a thing would not be representative of what he had heard about great artists. He wanted to go hungry for a little while. But by 3.46 he was so hungry he unlocked the door and was going to run across the street to Chauper's Restaurant when one of his sign customers came in.

The first thing the customer did was to go over to the beautiful painting on the easel. 'Ah!' said the customer, who was a fruit and vegetable man, 'I see you have completed my order. Such a fine job I never saw before. It is exquisite!' He went up to the painting, rubbing his fat hands together and talking so fast and excitedly that my uncle was unable to follow him. 'And completed in such quick time, too. My, oh my!'

He snatched the painting from the easel while my uncle was trying to tell him that it was for the Municipal Art Gallery and not for the market. The man paid no attention, and was out of the shop and down the street before my uncle realized what had happened.

Of course Uncle Horace tried to run after the man, who was heading for the fruit and vegetable market, but he was too hungry to run and soon was lost in a cloud of dust. Dejectedly he turned around and went back to the little restaurant on the other side of the street, where he ordered a cheese sandwich, a pickle, some mustard, and coffee. He was again the unhappiest man in Junction Center, and the possibility of his being hung in the Municipal Art Gallery seemed less and less likely.

He hurried with his meal, told the proprietor to write it on the cuff because he was in a big hurry, and then started up the street toward the fruit and vegetable market. He had his sleeves rolled up to his elbows and his small mouth turned downward, and his hair looked more like an artist's than ever before. He was in a furious frame of mind, and he took long, important steps.

By the time my Uncle Horace got to Mr. Eisenstein's fruit and vegetable market, the place was closed. He pounded on the back door, then went around to the front, where he saw a large crowd of people looking in one of the market windows. A policeman on horseback was attempting to maintain order.

'What is the matter?' my Uncle Horace asked the policeman.

'All I know is that I was sent here to maintain order. I don't know what's the matter.'

'Thank you,' said my Uncle Horace, who was very polite.

Finally curiosity got the better of him, and he elbowed his way through the large crowd, getting his feet stepped on but pushing through in a way that was typical of his artistic temperament. When he got within seeing distance of the window he was surprised to find his painting. He stepped back and for a moment covered his eyes with his hands. He was indignant to think of such a fine painting on display in a fruit and vegetable window. There was no doubt that the painting of all those vegetables

and that cow was a magnificent thing, but to see it where it was jarred his artistic sense. He wanted to find a brick and throw it through the window. 'This is a terrific insult!' he cried.

Just then he heard an onlooker make a casual remark. Others standing in the crowd agreed. They were saying how lifelike the painting was, how true to form, how modern. 'Who is the artist?' he heard another ask.

With heart swelling with pride he left the crowd and walked across the street and looked at them in a solid body. A

smile came across his narrow face, for he was an artist. He watched a while longer, then turned and began walking slowly toward his little shop on Woodland Street, but before he was half-way there he began to run. He remembered the other sign orders left in the drawer of his desk. And as he ran, his hair blowing in the evening breeze, my Uncle Horace told himself that perhaps more people would see his painting there in the fruit and vegetable market than would see it in a whole year if he were hung in the Municipal Art Gallery.

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## NOW IT IS SUMMER

BY MARGARET ELIZABETH RHODES

AFTER long peace there comes the silver chatter,  
The flutter of leaf, of feather,  
The thin voices of birds (lighter, far more light  
Than spider upon heather);  
Bright, clean, white out of the pool of night  
Their cool songs scatter.

Branch-rocked to rest, eyes berry-black, unhooded  
In timeless contemplation  
Over the warm flecked shells she frills her breast  
Beruffled teasel-fashion,  
Bold, wise, unfolds over her world of nest,  
Secret and wooded.

After long peace there is the call at dawning,  
Multitudinous awaking,  
The shrill clamor of welcome to swallow comer,  
The tumble of glee-making.  
And we winter-weary now know it is summer,  
Now know it is morning.



# THE NEXT PEACE

BY GRAHAM HUTTON

## I

**H**ERE are three striking shots from the film of current history: —

*First.* On September 30 last, Mr. Neville Chamberlain's airplane taxis up to the concrete on its arrival in London from Munich. The Prime Minister waves a scrap of paper at the curious onlookers. With obvious optimism he cries: 'I believe it is peace for our time.'

*Second.* On March 29 in the Commons, a fortnight after Herr Hitler's final elimination of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Chamberlain undertakes once again not to introduce conscription in peacetime without full national consultation.

*Third.* On April 26 in the Commons, without previous consultation with anyone save those in his own immediate entourage, Mr. Chamberlain introduces conscription. Heckled by certain members of the Opposition, the Premier justifies his action (to quote the sympathetic British quarterly *Round Table*) 'by suggesting that the times through which we were living were not peace in any sense in which the term could fairly be used.'

These three shots raise striking queries on the answers to which depends not only the destiny of nations great and small, but perhaps also the development of civilization in the Old World.

Suppose Europe gets by for the next ten or twenty years without any actual shooting, — perhaps we had better say, with sacrifices of principle and profit for the sake of peace, extorted by threat of shooting, — what will remain at the end

of the period of 'peace'? Will there be any democracy left in Europe? Any private property? Any private enterprise, save that of a petty, local, feudal kind? It is ironical that to prevent actual shooting, once called 'war,' the British Big Four — Chamberlain, Simon, Hoare, and Halifax — now find themselves compelled to convert what we once called 'peace' into a kind of Hades, an intermediate state, of which they themselves refuse to speak as 'peace in any sense in which the term could fairly be used.' If, to prevent our slipping into real Hell, we have to make a long sojourn in Hades, will not the powers of darkness and of light eventually become indistinguishable? In other words, if Britain and her associates can only keep the present kind of 'peace' by rapidly becoming more and more totalitarian, will there be, in the long run, any significant difference between the systems of Germany, Italy, Russia, Britain, and France?

Irony may yield to irony. We may all find that a European crisis which began as a fundamental cleavage between democracy and despotism over foreign policy will end in complete European unity between domestic despotisms. To exorcise the demon of tyrannical force in foreign affairs at a perilously late hour, the European democracies have already invited in the totalitarian Satan. It would be a sardonic judgment upon their dilatoriness if they succeeded in preserving 'peace,' in preventing forceful *coups*

in foreign affairs, and in achieving European unity, by undoing themselves as democracies.

Thus, as I concluded last month's article on 'The Next War,' whether we are warmongers or peacemongers, whether we believe in a short and bloody or a long and neurotic purgatory, does not really matter very much; for 'peace is the proposition.' We have not got peace, and we may have real war. In that article I examined the implications of real war, up to the point where peacemaking became the problem. Now we have to examine the implications of peace, the next peace, whether after a war or not.

Theoretically, and in a ruthlessly cold spirit of detachment, it must be admitted that we *could* make and establish peace more easily after a war than in the present chaos of 'cold war' or 'hot peace.' In accord with my last article, I assume Germany and Italy cannot win a general European war in a military sense. Whether the victors would *establish* peace after *making* peace is open to grave doubt. They might be tempted to do what the victors did not do in 1918 and 1919: namely, proceed to drastic extremes in dealing with a people so disastrously given to militaristic 'leadership' as the Germans. On the other hand, after the next war, however short, both sets of contestants will have gone completely over the brink of domestic bankruptcy, and there will be no reparations. Consequently, the ability to exact a Carthaginian peace may not be there on the victors' side, nor may the will; for great political and social changes will certainly occur in Britain and France once they become fully totalitarian at war. It is as likely that the next war will end by handshaking between a Socialist Germany and a Socialist Britain as it is that it will end by a Fascist Britain's grinding a revolutionary Socialist or Communist Germany into the dust for Fascist Britain's safety. Neither is predictable; either is likely. Now that thinking Europeans see Germany and

Italy going Leftward, Russia going Rightward, and Britain flirting with the Russian Fascism against the German and Italian brands of Socialism, no one can say what will happen.

But just because the outlook is so obscure, it becomes more obvious that 'peace after war' would be an easier proposition (owing to its dictatability) than 'peace after "peace."' Yet here again the issue is clouded; for if we determinedly engage in war, believing that at any rate when it is ended we can remould Europe nearer to our heart's desire, we may be just as disillusioned as many were in 1919, and as the extremist Nazis are going to be, anyhow. For in the meantime, while winning the war in a military sense, we may lose everything worth enjoying in peace: namely, freedom, representative government, the highest European standards of living, individualistic culture — all indissolubly bound up with what we have come to term the democratic way of life.

Indeed, this much has already been made perfectly plain to the British and French peoples by their governments during the last twelve months. In that short time, a time which no one now dares call peace, France has completely abandoned any pretense of representative government, and only the barest lip service to honored forms and traditions in England — for example, the perfunctory use of Parliamentary debate — disguises the fact that the destiny of the British people lies in the uncontrolled determination of a handful of Conservatives. The advent of mob voting at the behest of opposing demagogues was the bogey of nineteenth-century Whigs and Tories alike. To-day British democracy has come to mean a contest every few years between opposing party machines, the directors of each intent upon swindling the electorate on as wholesale a scale as possible in order to secure five years of unchallengeable power. And, on the whole, the electorate has betrayed an almost indecent passion for being swin-

dled — until to-day, when less than 50 per cent of the electorate in the last seven by-elections troubled to use their vote at all. (These hard words are used only of British democratic *government*, not of the British feeling for the democratic way of life. The latter is a real article of faith, even though that faith is only 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'!)

Consequently British and French citizens, the men and women who are making great personal sacrifices in behalf of what remains of Europe's culture, face a dreadful dilemma. Called on by governments that have themselves lost any faith in democracy at home to defend, by blood and sacrifice, what former democracy bequeathed to Europe, they obey without examining too closely the horns of the dilemma. And that spells the end of democracy at home. This is the thing that is wrong with European democracy, and the thing that robs fervent democrats of any conviction that, should they go to war, they would be really 'fighting to make the world safe for democracy.' No thinking European can believe that any more — though Mr. Eden and other dissident Conservatives sometimes say it in public. If we fight, we shall be fighting for our property and our skins. If we preserve our skins, it will only be by sacrificing our property along with our liberties. But if we do not fight we shall eventually have to sacrifice our property along with our liberties just the same. Heads I win, tails you lose. The only difference is in the timing; and that isn't much. The latest issue of the *Round Table* puts it discreetly, but clearly, from the neo-Imperialist standpoint:

The economic future, if we are spared the war that many of us fear, can only be a matter for speculation; for immense government borrowing, conscription for a quarter of a million young men a year, and a considerable diversion of civilian activity from its normal channels, have produced an entirely new economic order of things, and may well produce a new social order.

Thus, 'the proposition is peace'; but what kind of peace? A peace *à la* Munich? Another Versailles, only worse, after an infinitely worse war? A peace which reduces all Europe to totalitarian standards of living and culture? A peace which weans totalitarianism back to democracy, or one which weans all European democracy away to totalitarianism? A peace which re-creates private enterprise and frees commerce between the powers by reversing the arms race, or one which, based on an uneasy armistice between expanding arsenals, finally wipes out private enterprise and private international trade? These are all questions about ends; but to answer them we must know the answers to others about means. For example, can a durable peace be established by new bilateral pacts for disarmament and the denunciation of existing alliances, or only by the perfecting of an overwhelming military combination of powers pledged to resist aggression on one of their number? These are two totally opposite means to the single end of peace; but which, in Europe to-day, will attain the end? Again, take the economic factor: would Europe's vestigial democracies strengthen the factors making for peace, or those making for war, if they *gave* (that is, donated, without any payment at all) to the Axis powers fresh territories, colonies, special financial and commercial concessions, loans, food, and raw materials? We all agree on the end, peace. But we powerfully differ on the means proposed to attain it. Therefore we must concern ourselves almost exclusively with the political and economic means now under consideration by Europe's statesmen.

## II

Let us begin by taking the proposition that we *can* avoid war, establish real peace, and preserve liberty and prosperity by rational discussion of grievances with the Axis powers, leading to final agreement. This is the main as-

sumption on which all British policy was, and is still, reared. Britain, say Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, is only organizing her own forces and those of others against her will, because Germany compels her to.

The first warning reaches us from Italy herself. Signor Mussolini has devotedly tried to collaborate with Herr Hitler's system. Italian Fascism was in many ways more fit to do so than any European democracy. What has happened? Signor Mussolini is credibly reported to be pacifistic, to loathe the Genii which he has helped to let out of the German bottle. Nonetheless, Italy is as much a prisoner of the German system to-day as the Duce is, in fact, of the Gestapo and its Italian brokers, Count Ciano and Signor Starace.

The second warning comes from our experience in Europe's democracies. For years we Englishmen have been led by a handful of our own citizens who thought (and disastrously acted on the thought) that by 'taking the long view,' by 'appeasing' the so-called temporary aberration of Naziism, by conferring, discussing, offering, and chaffering, we should escape unscathed, should get by without war, merely at the cost of smaller powers' souls and property. Well, they sacrificed the smaller powers; they have only got by without shooting, but not without war. And we are now in the throes of being scathed by the very men who committed the blunders of the last eight years. We in Europe's democracies are being scathed by a domestic authoritarianism, exercised by a small oligarchy, just because their policy has raised the Axis powers to a dangerous eminence. In the name of that danger (and it is cynically called 'a danger to democracy') democracy is being frozen stiff. Ironically, the refrigeration is being voluntarily carried out by convinced democrats. These good-hearted folk accord the governments of Britain and France full support in the belief that such governments, having swung their foreign

policies through an arc of 180 degrees, are now worthy of trust. What is likely to happen if these governments, responsible for the pass to which we are all reduced, now open negotiations with Herr Hitler, Signor Mussolini, General Franco, and the Japanese? Will an embryonic, much publicized Peace Front cow Nazis and Fascists into honesty, sincerity, and coöperation?

These considerations are vital; for there is ample evidence in London that 'appeasement' is alive and kicking, even if off stage. There are great gulfs fixed between (a) what the British Government declares, (b) what the small group within and without the Cabinet intends, and (c) what the public-spirited citizen thinks is the policy which his sacrifices are helping to execute.

This is nothing new in British history. It has nothing to do with the present division of Europe on ideological grounds. During the general European wars of Louis XIV and Napoleon, there were cabals and camarillas in high places, seeking to enlist the British citizen's body, property, and liberties for a policy flatly contradictory to that proclaimed to him. It is only one aspect of a policy which seeks, as much as ever any dictator ever did, but in more genteel and kindly guise, power for power's sake.

The present administration in England must go to the country within the next twelve months, if there is no war. (If there is, this administration will vote itself immortal.) There is now no Opposition in which the electorate can have any confidence. Accordingly, on the assumption of an election in the fall, the same political strategy is being pursued which was initiated by Mr. Baldwin (as he then was) in November of 1935. This is as follows.

The Opposition's criticisms are belatedly accepted as the Government's new policy, which involves a startling 180-degree whip-round. This is done by Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, and Sir Samuel Hoare in the summer and fall

of 1935, when they adopt the sanctions policy against Italy, in order to quiet the 11,000,000 League of Nations supporters up and down the country. Next, the Opposition being deprived of any electoral leg to stand on, the Government calls a General Election on the Opposition's platform. Thirdly, it wins a crushing majority. Lastly, and in 1935 within six weeks, it publicly tears up its electoral program and pulls a Hoare-Laval on everybody — but is 'in' for another four years! This is sound party management, from which even the Nazis could learn. To-day the same dangerous situation has been prepared by Mr. Chamberlain's *volte-face* a little over three months ago. Again there is no leg for the Opposition to stand on. There is now none for Mr. Churchill or Mr. Eden to stand on. Gone are the days when a Prime Minister, having been proved disastrously wrong in every aspect of his policy, and the Opposition proved right, resigned. To-day he gets another five years of power for adopting, even if too late, the Opposition's program. Then he jettisons the program and, if precedents are trustworthy, reverts to his former policy. While this is still called representative government in England, it is difficult to find out who represents whom, and for what. The danger is that, in confusing this brilliant party management with the governance of an apparent democracy, the outside world may come to attach no credence whatever to anything a British Prime Minister may say *before* a General Election. Indeed, it may do more; it may believe the exact opposite.

That is exactly what the Russians — and to a less extent the Poles, Rumanians, Greeks, Turks, Belgians, Dutch, Scandinavians, and even the French — have long been thinking about Mr. Chamberlain's startling reversal of foreign policy. That is why peacetime conscription was necessary in England, to 'show we meant business.' That is why Mr. Strang, who is not a Minister but a

Foreign Office servant, has had to be sent posthaste to Moscow, where Britain maintains an Ambassador. And if all these people were skeptical, what about the effect on Herr Hitler? Are we warranted in assuming that all Dr. Goebbels's beating of the 'encirclement' drum is due to anger and fear at Mr. Chamberlain's grim determination? Or is it that the exigencies of domestic politics in England have forced Messrs. Chamberlain, Simon, Hoare, and Halifax to present Herr Hitler with a heaven-sent rallying cry for the German people at a time when they were particularly disunited? If it really *is* the latter, then Mr. Chamberlain's and Lord Halifax's fervent bids for 'negotiation' with Germany in Lords and Commons during June acquire a subtler significance. They seem to indicate the discomfiture of the British Inner Cabinet over the acceleration in European affairs caused by their own Peace Front boost. Is it desperation that prompts these offers? Or desire to clear Britain of the charge of 'encirclement'? Or preparation for such negotiations as may prevent, before a General Election, an irresistible warlike challenge from Herr Hitler, so that, after the election, another and more extensive Munich may be made with him? All these explanations are current in London. Yet no one dares to come out in the open and tackle the root problem: what kind of agreement, what kind of peace, can be made *anyhow* between Germany and the vestigial democracies?

On the one hand, all the government's spokesmen — press and politicians alike — loudly play up the Peace Front. They say Britain will certainly keep to her bond and fight. On the other, they all equally loudly play up the government's willingness to negotiate. The results on the Continent have been such as to weaken the resolution of the Front's members, and to strengthen Nazi beliefs that the British are crumbling once more. This in turn calls forth violent counter-protestations from the British Govern-



ment's spokesmen, press, and radio. That annoys the Nazis again. And thus Europe travels farther and farther from real peace.

Perhaps the greatest factor making for peace — at a price which it is not reckoned decent even to mention in England — is the rapidity with which the political and economic systems of Britain and France are being made to catch up with those of the Third Reich.

This, again, is a hard saying and demands precise formulation. It does not mean that the British and French Governments, and the small groups within and without their Parliaments from which the administrators of Britain and France are now being drawn, are a band of crypto-thugs waiting with glee to clap everyone into a concentration camp. Far from it. It does, however, mean that all the British and French apparatus of State is being taken over by a small group for the duration of a crisis which may last a generation. So much is already plain in both countries. The chief positions in the new bureaus, ministries, boards, and so forth, being set up in England are being distributed among an exceedingly narrow group of men who sympathize with the policy formerly advocated by Mr. Neville Chamberlain. This applies to the new department of information in the Foreign Office, which will immediately become the Ministry of Propaganda in wartime, headed by the former British Ambassador in Rome. Censorship of the press, films, and radio has already been arranged. The civil service, together with the big public corporations like the British Broadcasting Corporation, are being combed out; and those with political views known to have been at variance with government policy are to be allocated to wartime posts very inferior to their powers, and inferior to posts to be obtained by government supporters, known as 'sound men.'

Again, this is not new; but it occurred in wartime before, and a long time after war had been going on. To-day we in

England have already reached that stage of warfare at which the Budget is hopelessly out of balance, domestic trade and foreign trade are being alike distorted, all business is primarily subject to governmental requirements, hours are being lengthened, skilled labor is being diluted by unskilled, taxes are rising, and personal consumption must be reduced. The entire British economy is now entering the perilous, if necessary, stage of an armaments boom — a boom which five years ago the Nazis showed us how to produce. It is obtained by earmarking more and more of the national annual production for unproductive, unconsumable arms. It lasts until its continuous expansion, like a cancer, begins to eat into that part of the economy which serves consumption needs. Then labor must be intensified, women enrolled for men's work, the range of consumers' choice curtailed, and enterprise further controlled so as to set free more men, money, and materials to produce (or bear) arms. As long as there is a lot of slack in the country's economic rope, — unemployed men, money, machines, materials, — arms are like civilian public works, except that they add nothing at all to the nation's annual flow of amenities and consumables. But when the slack gets near to tautness, strain becomes observable. That has been happening for two years in Germany. It is as yet barely observable in England. When the tautness itself is strained, strands in the rope begin to part here and there. That is now happening in the Reich. It has not yet occurred in England. But the margin in time is thin. Already it has become necessary to put British industry under a blanket provision enabling the government to step in and take over any firm proving recalcitrant or an obstacle to the progress of the defense program. The real problem in this system is not the standing of the strain, but slacking off the rope again!

The realization of all these things has impelled the Federation of British In-

dustries, a body of industrialists far less liberal-minded than the American National Association of Manufacturers, zealously to advocate, lobby, and propagand for an agreement between the British and German Governments to 'divide and rule' the trade of Europe and beyond. The F.B.I. negotiators at Düsseldorf last March saw their hopes dashed by Herr Hitler's annexation of all Czechoslovakia; yet they have not repined. Indeed, the F.B.I. scheme, which raised a furore of resentment in the City, has never been disavowed by the government; and the recent governmental hints of British readiness to talk economic concessions with the Reich have resuscitated the F.B.I. scheme. Another furore in the City was caused by the Bank of England representative's quiet agreement at a meeting of the Bank of International Settlements to hand over to its German colleague on the B.I.S., the Reichsbank, all the Czech gold lodged in the Bank of England. In this case, Mr. Montagu Norman's habitual susceptibility to a German request was screened in the Commons by the skillful and long-practised advocacy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir John Simon blandly informed questioners that he could not be expected to answer for the actions of the board of 'this Swiss bank'!

Thus there is evidence to show that, politically, Mr. Chamberlain and his associates — both within and without Parliament — would probably push through an agreement with Herr Hitler, once the General Election in England was safely in the bag. But there's the rub. What agreement? On what? Would it mean peace? Presumably not; otherwise Mr. Chamberlain and his associates would not have needed to prepare for war on the truly drastic scale which they have, with efficient speed and much desperation, adopted. Then if not peace, could they at any rate establish the current kind of 'cold war,' or 'hot peace,' for an indeterminate season?

There is reason to believe that this, in fact, is the real aim of the British Government, and therefore of the acquiescent French Government. It marks the peak of their ambition; and it is a terrible comment on their record that the peak should now have to be set so low. For mark what it implies.

The present stage in European affairs, political and economic, is a race between bankruptcies. Those bankruptcies are political as well as economic. Every time the British Government sees the Third Reich's rope nearing snapping point — that is, every time Europe reaches the brink of war-with-shooting — some new formula has to be devised to stave off an explosive German bankruptcy. The democracies send the hat round. Hitherto it has stopped short of the two big fellows, France and Britain. Can it stop short of them in future? Apparently not, since they have had to fence off the abyss by a Peace Front. Yet suppose in the near future Herr Hitler is clever enough not to ride full tilt against that fence. Suppose he does not attack any of the Front's members frontally, but by internal fomentation, so that it becomes very hard to say whether Poland's, or any other guaranteed State's, integrity is threatened *from without*. If the Polish Government took up arms against a 'rebellion,' would the British Government adjudge this to be beyond the scope of its guarantee? How would they decide if Poland were really the victim of 'aggression'? Here, at least, is an opening for another Runciman Mission, another installment to keep the current kind of peace going at someone else's expense.

The coincidence of the crisis over Tientsin with the continuous delay in Anglo-Russian negotiations clearly shows how strongly British policy is still bent on appeasement, no matter how great the provocations on the other side may be. The speeches of Lord Halifax, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. R. A. Butler over Tientsin have made it quite clear that

the British Government is prepared neither to take a firm line with Japan nor to extend the Anglo-Russian negotiations to cover the Far East. That this conclusion has quickly been drawn by the Nazi High Command is obvious from the immediate German preparations against Danzig and Poland.

Enlargement of the Reich to include Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Rumania — even if thinkable for Britain and France from the strategic standpoint — would not diminish, indeed would of necessity vastly increase, the Reich's administrative and economic problems *in the short run*. As that short run would be at least five years, the danger of a warlike explosion within those five years would not be eradicated. It would remain; but more strength would be behind the Reich than it enjoys to-day. Hence, a peace so bought and so established would not offer us a single solution for our current problems and dangers. We can accept one thing as axiomatic: that the more this Reich expands, the stronger will Nazism need to be clamped down upon it, the less possibility will there be of any return to economic normalcy in Germany's system. Indeed, the Nazi system cannot continue to exist if it starts to 'return' to anything which preceded it. Its very nature is antithetical, negative, contradictory to normalcy. So much my friend Mr. Peter F. Drucker has made abundantly clear in his brilliant book, *The End of Economic Man*.

Accordingly, the more the remaining European democracies are forced to face up to the Reich by copying, more efficiently, its political and economic methods, the more impossible they, too, will find it to make any return to normalcy. They will find it impossible to unscramble eggs. Already one of the nightmares haunting the British Government's new economic General Staff is the problem how to *undo*, if we get real peace, the current financial, industrial, and administrative tangle of war economy. The tighter that tangle is drawn by the need

to maintain an armed peace, the closer will Germany's and Britain's fundamental social, political, and economic problems approximate. A war would solve those problems, inevitably and drastically. A continuous armed peace (which is no peace) would merely aggravate, by enlarging, them.

Perception of these issues is responsible for the grim air of resignation which now broods over Whitehall (though not over Downing Street!). The gentlemen whose business is war preparation know, like physicians, when symptoms are ripe enough to warrant prognosis. These keen-faced technicians do not fool themselves. Their job is not to dispute over ends. They are engaged in studying warlike means. Privately they recognize war to be inevitable. They leave the politicians to count on miracles. They know that a European agreement establishing real peace would be a real miracle. So they get on with their job — receiving the almost uninterrupted military, naval, air, and economic missions from France, Poland, Rumania, Greece, Turkey, and dispatching British missions back to these places. Soon we shall read of 'exchanges' with Moscow; and that will make some more amusing reading in the *London Times*. If ever peace were to be secured, as well as desired, by preparing for war, Europe now ought to be enjoying it!

### III

But suppose a miracle does occur. Suppose Germany, Italy, Britain, France, and (of course, or of course not?) Russia conclude an agreement which provides for a halt and reversal in the arms race, settlement of just grievances, economic concessions to enable Germany and Italy to 'unwind' the taut mainsprings of their war economy, and an effective form of sanction for the honest fulfillment of the agreement. What would it involve?

First, we should have to face every social and economic effect of a vast de-

mobilization after 'cold war.' It would have to be done gradually. There are to-day about 6,000,000 men — of military and therefore of working age — *actually under arms* in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Poland alone. This includes men whose whole time is taken up by service in their government's military or air-raid defense forces, as well as the S.S. (but not the S.A.) in Germany. Yet this number could be vastly swollen if we added all men whose whole-time work was in behalf of military or defensive preparations. Indeed, if we compare all Europe's demobilization problem with that of 1918 (and exclude Russia and the U.S.A.), we find that, owing to the increase in population since 1918 and the absence of any killing of men in the present 'cold war,' we have a problem already half as large as that which faced Europe a mere two decades ago after four years of real warfare. If the present 'hot peace' goes on for another two years, our problem will then be almost as great in numbers as it was in 1918. This is something few people can realize. It is a colossal social, political, and economic problem for Europe entire. It is a problem which has not arisen as a *peacetime* effect since the Middle Ages (with which there are, alas, so many parallels to-day!), when the peasants flocked to the new towns and upset the agrarian basis of feudal society. And it arises, unfortunately, in an epoch when there is no opening up of industry and the world, as there was in the Middle Ages and after the Napoleonic Wars. It arises, indeed, at a time when Britain is coping with the economic legacy of the last war by preparing for the next — witness the unemployment figures in her 'distressed areas.' Thus, the new problems could *only* be dealt with in totalitarian fashion, by vast public-works schemes on a national and even international scale.

Secondly, in order to face up to the warlike achievements of Germany, Italy, and so forth, private capitalism and private enterprise have already had to give

way to collectivist economies in Britain, France, and so forth. It is therefore evident that Europe could not go back to the 'private' (whether individual or corporate) kind of economy which ruled up to 1914. If we now secured a real and lasting peace by agreement with Germany and Italy, we in the vestigial democracies could not possibly maintain our part of world commerce and finance on 'private' lines. Here, of course, the Federation of British Industries are right, in their own behalf, in trying to cash in with the German industrialists before any peace agreement is accomplished. They are, in the same sense, right to try to make a joint cartel system with German industry; for, as with the existing British and German steel industries, governments give them the status of public board, with extensive powers over domestic and foreign trade, tariffs, and so forth, when they are organized as an industrial monopoly. The F.B.I. have simply recognized, earlier than others in England, that British private enterprise is bound to die quickly, peace or war. Accordingly, their duty to themselves is to secure the most favorable position and powers under a new régime. That they chose to do so first in the field of foreign trade is understandable, for the German system represents the greatest threat to the British industrialists, and — as with the German budgetary and rearmament systems — to meet it the British Government has had to adopt the same methods.

It is gradually becoming apparent, in America as in Europe, that after 1918 we tried to, but never did, 'get back' to the good old days of private enterprise; that the post-war gold standard from 1925 to 1931 was a flash in the pan; and that the crash after 1929 was not just a depression but the delayed effect of causes working out before the war of 1914-1918, and infinitely accelerated by it. Consequently we in Europe's so-called democracies cannot do anything else than go forward with the social, political, and



above all the economic tide of totalitarianism. We cannot back up. We tried to do so in the halcyon peace of 1919-1929. Since then we have only paid lip service to the household gods of private enterprise, while plunging ever deeper into the opposite movement. Since 1935 we have lost every chance we had. Now, if we make a miraculous peace with the more ruthless totalitarian systems, we shall have to become efficiently authoritarian ourselves, in all walks of public life — finance, trade, politics, and (I fear) social life.

In parenthesis, I should like once more to explain more fully my use of the words 'authoritarian' and 'totalitarian' in reference to Britain, France, and other vestigial European democracies. These words have come to wear a derogatory aura, draped round them by our shame at the barbarities disfiguring the régimes of Germany, Italy, and Russia. Therefore when I say Britain and France will have to go authoritarian, I run the risk of being understood to say that Britain and France will be run by gangs of toughs, that concentration camps will be instituted, and that no one will be allowed to think or say what he likes. I do not mean that. It would not sit upon the shoulders of the British and French peoples, who have not been defeated in war, are not ill-fed, and are exceedingly individualistic in their likes and dislikes. I do, however, mean that the liberties of labor, movement, enterprise, speech, the press, property, public meeting, and political activity, will be rapidly and increasingly restricted by a small oligarchy. This oligarchy will represent itself as representing the people, by the simple expedient of making it impossible for anyone else to represent them. The forces of administration and the civil service will be controlled to that end; and the forces of private enterprise will at first willingly support this system, as they did in Germany. (Already in England it is pathetic to hear once-great Labor and Liberal voices advocating,

in the plea of national emergency, the granting of powers which will quickly reduce Liberalism and 'Labor-ism' to nought.) The way in which this brand of authoritarianism will be administered in England and France will be kindly. The mass of the people will scarcely be aware of it at first, especially as in both countries the civil service is decent and the traditional and conventional forms of doing things will be scrupulously respected. In the end, authority will be snatched from the hands of the elder Tories who first seized it. In peace or war, the younger men will prove more radical.

In many ways authoritarianism will do the lackadaisical English people a lot of good. It may even make them think out anew the reason why their forgotten ancestors fought and died for certain liberties. After a lapse of years — the two generations now aged from thirty-five to seventy-five in English politics (who have ruled or acquiesced since 1914) will have to pass from the scene altogether — the present younger generation, aged fifteen to thirty-five, may get its chance. It may get that chance very soon now — before it is twenty-five to forty-five. The younger spirits during the Napoleonic Wars railed at the Tories who were 'in' from 1782 to 1830. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Leigh Hunt — they had to pocket their impatience and await their turn. But 1832 came in the end, more than fifty years after the Tories had lost the Thirteen Colonies; and England was saved from the Fascism of 'the King's Friends.' That is all I mean when I use the word 'authoritarian' of England. I mean that, perhaps for half a century, perhaps only for a few years, England will have to pass again under the elder Tories' yoke as it did at the time of the Six Acts. In the end it will be good for England, and very bad for the Tories. In the interim it will certainly be as unpleasant for the thinking few as it was between 1789 and 1823.

The third main effect on Britain and



her associates of a reliable accord with Germany would be social and financial. Quite apart from having to give Germany money and colonies, perhaps even ships and materials, it will soon become obvious that Britain cannot maintain the National Debt, the balance of payments, her overseas investment income, and the heavy burden of social services at home. If we regard arms and defense as being gradually eliminated from the sphere of production, we shall have to bridge the gap, absorb not only soldiery and conscripts but also men formerly making swords, and institute public works to turn out ploughshares on a scale vast enough to eliminate unemployment altogether. We shall have the arms money to spend, but not the fictitious arms prosperity. As authoritarianism spreads in the neo-democracies, as liberalism and socialism and Marxism and communism come to sound like echoes from a dim past, so will Toryism — the respectable kind — fade, too. Authority will breed its own brand of oligarchs. They will be younger men. Then, as in every revolution, Levelers will appear.

The group in power, though they hug the symbols of British monarchy and democracy never so tightly, will be gradually forced to legislate more and more for the inarticulate mass of the people, whom they began by despising. They will always be outbid by younger men. The elder Tories will not dare prune the social services, which touch so many millions, when they can as easily prune the City, the big incomes, the annual service of the colossal (and by now rapidly growing) National Debt. 'The conscription of wealth,' that phrase so beloved of our present dim socialists and liberals, will actually be brought in by younger Tories as a new discovery to placate the masses and consolidate power. In fact, as we have already witnessed in the last five crisis years of Tory rule, the measures taken by a Tory government of an authoritarian kind will become steadily more and more

radical; just as the Nazis, whom superficial German industrialists and Anglo-Saxons once spoke of as 'the Right Wing,' have turned out to be violently of the Left. In fact, in economic and financial measures as in political methods, any authoritarian régime which begins mildly in a neo-democracy will soon be forced out of alignment with old party labels and programs. There will be no more High Tory and Progressive Tory and National Liberal and Opposition Liberal and Socialist and Communist.

I repeat, authoritarianism, once adopted (and it really doesn't matter who is the first party to adopt it), will breed its own species of oligarch. Each will get more and more radical. The effect of this on the highly conventionalized, rigid, stratified economic, financial, and social structures of Britain will indeed be worth watching. You will see all foreign trade and exchange under control by the oligarchic State; all domestic investment, production of investment goods, food distribution, social services, transport, fuel and power output, utilities, and so forth. The obverse of this must necessarily be (as in the Reich) the disruption and realignment of all Britain's oversea trade and financial connections. And, of course, the field of real private enterprise will necessarily become so exiguous as scarcely to be significant.

I have developed this aspect of the 'peace with dictators' rather fully because there is a disposition abroad to caricature English and French Tories and business men as congenital idiots, anxious for 'a deal with Hitler' *in order to secure for their and their children's enjoyment private property and private enterprise in England.* This I take to be far from the truth. Some (and some we have all had to dine alongside) certainly are congenital idiots as far as Europe's crisis is concerned. They are pathetically ignorant, self-confident, and dim. But they are a minority. The great majority are shrewd, well-informed, and astute.

They seek only to support, share, and even control the new authoritarian controllers of the country, in order that, when private property and private enterprise fade out (as the surprising majority frankly expect them now to do), they and their children may become the high executives and 'Stakhanovites' of the New Economic Policy. Though they too will be cheated of power as authoritarianism develops, this is the way they now think.

All this sounds like state socialism. So it is. So it must be, if we in Europe are all to live and lie down together, instead of shooting each other, for the next few years or decades. Only, of course, as in the last two decades and the last half of last century, a reliable and durable state socialism can only be brought in by a party which the owners of great possessions trust. It becomes a bourgeois revolution. That is all.

#### IV

It would not be fair to conclude without sketching the possibilities of peace after real warfare.

War operates in only one way on a country's social and economic structure. *It is the most powerful accelerator known to man.* It raised, and did not lower, standards of living between 1914 and 1929 at a faster pace than peace would have permitted. In and after a war, trends and tendencies which would have taken decades to work out are completed in months and even weeks. Effects which would have been only gradually perceptible are suddenly felt as explosive convulsions. War seldom, if ever, reverses or arrests a tendency. It generally raises the functioning of preëxisting peacetime factors to the *n*th power. It made for equality, not inequality, after 1919. It is, moreover, the younger generation's opportunity either to die or quickly to rise to high positions. Consequently to-day, more than ever in history, we can safely predict that what-

ever is likely to occur gradually if peace endures will occur immediately and violently if war breaks out. Accordingly, all the developments we have foreseen as occurring with 'the inevitability of gradualness' during peace — whether 'hot' peace or normal peace does not matter — are still bound to happen in war, but without any gradualness. The war being militarily won by means of a rapid shift to totalitarianism, what kind of peace is likely to supervene?

I have already indicated my belief that, viewed in utter cold blood, the actual making and establishing of a real peace would theoretically be easier after a modern war than without such a war. That is, of course, only to say that human beings act better when they are *forced* to do one thing than when they have the *choice* of doing many things; that they work better on means when the end has been determined by forces beyond their control. If Europe were to be dragged through another blood-bath because human reason could not agree on a common European end, human reason would quickly devise means to win the war and to establish peace once the war was over. And younger men would make, and keep, peace. It would have to be made more quickly than in the Napoleonic Wars, and more quickly than in the last war. Europe cannot continue even as long a war as that of 1914-1918.

Peace of a sort having been made, the right kind of peace would have to be established; for after the next European war the process which was already under way in our social and economic systems before 1914 will have been twice boosted by war within one generation. If the social, political, and economic landmarks of European democracy have been gradually vanishing since 1914, and are bound to disappear under this kind of peace, how much more quickly will they vanish under another war!

Here the prospect becomes really interesting. For, although the British and French cannot justifiably go into another

war with the slogan of saving democracy, it *is* possible that their military victory in that war will bring Europe nearer to unity than at any time since the Middle Ages.

By this I mean that another general European war will exert an enormous leveling influence upon European society. Differences of aim and interest between nations may be reduced to a low point. The great differences of wealth, of caste snobbery, even of education inside the Great Powers, will be eradicated in the process of totalitarian war. The old will be killed with the young, women and children with soldiers. Old men will have less power after the war. The *rentier* class will be wiped out with National Debts. The intelligentsia and the hearty Bright Young Things alike, the pink trade-unionist and the true-blue employer, the shareholders and the directors, all these will find their traditionally opposing interests flattened out beneath the authoritarian steam-roller. Reason itself — the conceit of editors, authors, radio talkers, university professors, lawyers, politicians, and all professional men — will be in the discard. What is 'reasonable' will be defined daily by the government. And the tough, keen-faced, narrow-eyed, younger men who 'get things done' will eventually be the government, everywhere — no matter what decorative, smooth-faced old gentlemen *lead* the neo-democracies into the war. In the existing totalitarian states, these things have already occurred in time of peace. That, as I tried to point out in the former article, is probably why they will snap first once real war comes. But when it has come and gone, we shall all have snapped a good deal, victors and vanquished alike.

In this grim picture there is more than one gleam of hope. The mistake after 1918 was that of the victors' elderly representatives, nurtured in an earlier epoch, who imagined that, because they

had won the military victory, because they were stronger than the vanquished, they had in no way impaired the strength of Europe, the world, and themselves. Hence the ludicrous efforts to maintain old parities of currency together with crushingly multiplied National Debts, to secure reparations for everything by adding vast new loans, to 'return to' normalcy in world trade while maintaining at full running capacity all the vastly expanded productive equipment set up in neutral and belligerent countries alike during the war. For two decades we have been remorselessly taught the futility of such efforts. At any rate, it should teach us what to avoid after the next war. We ought now to realize, and to say to ourselves every day the war lasts, that we shall all have to stoop down together after the next European war, stoop down to one common dead level — socially, economically, politically — if ever we are to build a new order. (And if we don't build a new order, we shall stay longer on a lower dead level.) Even then, we shall possess only worn-out tools.

Americans may be surprised to find that they will not even be *asked* or needed to play any *military* part in the short next war. But when it is over, America's rôle will almost certainly become paramount. It will be peaceful. It will be constructive, not destructive. And it will be a task fully as big as that of one, two, and three centuries ago, when Europe opened up the New World. After the next war in Europe, America may be called on to reopen the Old World. America — or Russia. They are the two largest and most self-sufficing units in the western world. They can stand longer and endure more than any other power to-day. They both stretch from Pacific to Atlantic. The outcome of whatever happens in between them, in Europe, will determine their own destinies; and this whether it is war or peace — or neither.

# MARGERY KEMPE OF LYNN

BY SIGRID UNDSSET

## I

THE SPECTACLE of the wife of an English burgess writing her memoirs must have been a rare one in the fifteenth century. Of course it is a fact that throughout the Middle Ages a vast number of women wrote books, with their own hand or with the aid of a secretary. The only strange thing is the extent to which people have forgotten, since the Reformation and outside the Catholic tradition of culture, that in the whole of Catholic western Europe no one ever thought it more 'unwomanly' to write books than to bake bread. On the contrary, it was nowhere considered unseemly for women to follow learned occupations and busy themselves with pen and ink, whereas in many parts — in Vorarlberg and Switzerland, for instance — it was inadmissible for women to milk cows or tend cattle. These things were — and are still to some extent — men's work in those countries. Moreover, in the opinion of some anthropologists, such was the case in all primitive pastoral cultures.

Most mediæval women's books, however, come under the head of religious literature. Many of them have become Catholic classics and are read to this day, not only by the learned. But Margery Kempe's book is something unique in the literature of the Middle Ages. Fragments of it have long been known, but it was believed that the work in its entirety, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, was lost, and it was assumed that it was a book of religious medita-

tions, written by an anchorite, which is what her first editor calls her. And in fact the fragments of Margery's writing that were printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and afterwards reprinted many times, pointed to Margery's having been a contemplative mystic of the English school, whose greatest name is Lady Julian of Norwich. They bear witness to her power of finding pregnant expression for intense religious feeling: 'Lord, because of Thy great pain, have mercy on my little pain.' 'When she saw the crucifix, or if she saw a man with a wound, or a beast, whichever it were, or if a man beat a child before her, or smote a horse or other beast with a whip, if she saw it or heard it, she thought she saw Our Lord being beaten or wounded, just as she saw it in the man or the beast.' 'Our Lord said to her: In anything thou dost, daughter, thou mayest no better please God than by believing that He loveth thee; for if it were possible that I might weep with thee, I would weep with thee, daughter, for the compassion that I have of thee.' These are some of the sayings of Margery that were known.

Then it turned out that a manuscript of Margery Kempe's book had been lying all the time unnoticed in the library of Pleasington Old Hall, Lancashire. The present owner, Lieutenant Colonel Butler-Bowdon, had discovered the old book even in his boyhood and had wondered what might be in it. So in 1935 he took it to an expert who identified the manuscript. An edition of the

text furnished with the necessary learned apparatus will in due course be published by the Early English Text Society. Meanwhile Colonel Butler-Bowdon has already issued his own translation — or transcription — in modern English. How the manuscript came to be in Pleasington Hall can only be a matter of conjecture. It originally belonged to the Carthusian monastery of Mount Grace, and it is not unlikely that when the monks were driven out by the creatures of Henry VIII they entrusted the contemporary Butler of Pleasington with some of their books and valuables to be preserved in the hope of better times. The Butlers are one of the old English families who clung to their Catholic faith through all persecutions and adversity.

The world of English books, rich as it is, has thus been made richer by a unique work, and the mystical anchorite Margery Kempe reveals herself as anything but an anchorite, and a very original lady. It is true that many mediæval women's books occasionally give us biographical facts about their author and contain sections which throw light on the intimate and private daily life of their time. But, as has been said, most of them are purely religious works, and the most important of them were written by authors who were also saints. With the saint's absence of egoism, they are entirely occupied with God's workings, and they are interested in their own soul because it is the Deity's field of activity, where He acts as they know He would gladly act in all souls, if only they would allow Him.

But Margery Kempe was no saint — in any case she did not become one in those years of her life of which the memoirs give us an account. She fought bravely against her sins and frailties, so far as she was aware of them herself. But if other people — her confessors, for instance — held a different opinion about anything in her conduct, Margery was extremely unwilling to admit that she did not know better herself. Her piety

is absolutely sincere, she loves her Saviour ardently and intensely, and she really wishes to be allowed to suffer for Him — scorn and disgrace and unpopularity in the world, both because this was the lot of Christ and because she thinks she has deserved it on account of her sins. But she would prefer to be persecuted and derided for uttering God's word in and out of season, and because the children of this world are offended by the gifts of grace she believes herself to have received — her visions and the violent and sensational forms assumed by her religious ecstasies. When people's displeasure is expressed in mere commonplace gossip and flippant talk, she does not like it at all.

At the end of her book she tells us that during a stay in London she was recognized by some people who met her in the street — Margery Kempe had by that time become a notorious and controversial figure in England. In passing they said loud enough for her to hear: 'Ah! thou false flesh, thou shalt no good meat eat.' Margery is furious and explains in some detail what was referred to — a malicious fabrication made up just after her conversion. She was supposed to have been at table in the house of a well-to-do family; it was a fast day and red herring was served as well as fresh fish; there were some boiled pike which were perfectly delicious. Margery was said to have let the dish of herring go past her: 'Ah! thou false flesh, thou wouldst now eat red herring, but thou shalt not have thy will.' Whereupon she helped herself to the pike. This story must have been at least twenty years old when Margery was reminded of it in London, but she refutes it as energetically as ever and attributes its invention to the Devil himself.

But it is precisely this self-absorption of Margery's that we may thank for the extraordinarily intimate and lively descriptions of people and circumstances to be found in her reminiscences. The old Eve, restless and self-assured and



opinionated, dies hard in her, and she reacts violently to everything that befalls her. She gives us a variety of information about life in Lynn, and goes on to tell us about her experiences on her endless pilgrimages, at first all over England, and then by land and sea across the whole of Europe and as far as the Holy Land. We even have a little glimpse of Norway. On her last voyage, when she accompanied her son's widow, who was returning to Danzig, their ship was forced to shelter at some place on the Norwegian coast — unfortunately she does not tell us where. But the travelers went ashore on Good Friday and stayed till Easter Monday. We are told that 'after the custom of the country, the Cross was raised on Easter Day about noontime,' so that Margery could have her devotion before it with weeping and sobbing as well as if she had been at home. On the Monday before they sailed, all on board received the body of the Lord, which must have been brought to them by the local Norwegian priest. As mediæval Church custom demanded that confession should immediately precede the reception of the Sacrament of the altar, we may suppose that the Norwegian priests along the southern trade routes must have had some knowledge of the lingo of the Baltic seafarers.

## II

Margery was born about 1373 at King's Lynn, Norfolk. This town was at that time one of the most important markets in England, and Margery's family belonged to the circle of the leading burgesses in the place. At the age of twenty she was married to a young man, John Kempe, who was regarded as a suitable match. There were fourteen children of the marriage, who play a surprisingly small part in her reminiscences. She refers directly to only one son. His mother wished that he should shun the sins and wickedness of the world and follow Christ, but all she gained by

it was that her son shunned his mother and her godly exhortations. He went to sea and finally settled down at Danzig as a trader. There he fell ill, after a fairly wild bachelor life. He himself and everyone else thought it was leprosy. So when he came home to Lynn he was repentant and begged his mother's forgiveness and her intercessions. Margery prayed and did penance for her son, and he recovered and returned to Danzig and his trading. He married a German girl. Her other children are only referred to in one passage, where she gives an account of her usual observance of prayer. First she always prayed for the spiritual welfare of all on earth, and then it was her custom specially to mention 'all my children, ghostly and bodily, that Thou make their sins to me by true contrition, as it were mine own sins, and forgive them as I would that Thou forgive me.'

She was dangerously ill after the birth of her first child and sent for her confessor. There was a sin which she had never been able to bring herself to confess, and even now she found it hard to speak of it. The priest was somewhat severe with her, and exhausted as the young wife was, spiritually and physically, this had the effect of disturbing her mind. For eight months she was tormented with diabolical visions and temptations to suicide; she raged and scoffed and was as spiteful to her husband as she could be. But one evening she had a vision: Jesus Himself came and sat down on the edge of her bed. He looked at her so gently and tenderly that she began to take heart. Then He said: 'Daughter, why hast thou forsaken Me, and I forsook never thee?'

Now she must have felt that she ought to be grateful to God and show it by serving Him. But she was proud and vain and took no serious step to reform herself. She dressed in a way that made her the talk of the whole town, and she could not bear having other women possess finer clothes or more precious

jewels. Her craving for admiration was insatiable. When her husband mildly asked her to be a little less provocative in her bearing, she replied curtly and irritably that he ought never to have married her — her father had been mayor and the biggest man in town, and she was going to act up to her birth.

In order to be financially independent of her husband she started a brewery, and in a year or two Margery was one of the biggest brewers in the town. But then things went badly and she lost a lot of money over it. Again she tried her hand in industry — this time a horse-mill and a bakery. This too turned out badly. The neighbors were delighted. But Margery began to think that perhaps Our Lord wished to cure her of her love of gain. And one night, as she lay beside her husband, she heard 'a sound of melody so sweet and delectable that she thought she had been in Paradise.' And she lamented: 'Alas, that ever I did sin! It is full merry in Heaven.'

But neighbors and friends had a hearty laugh when the worldly Margery Kempe took to discoursing about God and Heaven. And she, who till now had insisted on full sensual satisfaction in her conjugal life, was seized with an equally violent longing to be freed from her wifely duties. She besought her John that they might both make a vow of chastity. (According to Catholic doctrine, which maintains the indissolubility of marriage, it is not permissible for one of the partners to make this vow unless the other is willing to do the same.) For the time being, John Kempe was altogether opposed to promising anything of the sort. All these years he had been a good, affectionate, and very patient spouse, and it was natural enough that he should adopt a skeptical attitude towards his intractable wife's complete change of front. For now Margery thought of nothing but penance and fasting, neglected her household for daily and nightly devotions, and dragged the un-

fortunate John with her to church festivals and places of pilgrimage.

John was soon to be proved right in doubting Margery's transformation. For two years she carried on her exalted religious practices and showed abhorrence for cohabitation with her husband. And then all at once she was seized with an equally exalted passion for another man — one who had spoken to her a few times outside the church and made her dishonorable proposals, perhaps only in fun, to see how far Margery was in earnest in this new way of attracting attention to herself. But Margery fell headlong in love with the man — and came to the conclusion that God had cast her out, since He could let her be subjected to such a temptation. She gave up fighting against it, went to the man and offered herself. It turned out that he didn't want to have anything to do with her.

Margery went home, desperately humiliated and crushed. And when she thought upon her fall from grace she thought she must be driven mad with despair. For a long time her soul was tossed hither and thither between hopelessness and hope, remorse and rebellion, longing for true conversion and a life in God and temptations to fling herself into a wild life of sin, to go to ruin or take her own life. But one day as she knelt in church she had another vision: Jesus appeared to her again and spoke to her of His love for her soul. And all He asked was that she should return it. In His love she would find forgiveness for all her sinfulness. And if she would love Him in return, this love of hers would bring her so much persecution in this world that it would suffice for her penance.

### III

Now there begins a new phase of Margery Kempe's life. Prayer and contemplation take the form of 'visions' and long dialogues. With her 'inner comprehension' she hears Jesus speaking to

her, and she speaks to Him. Sometimes He brings His mother with Him, or various saints. These experiences can hardly have been actual visions. But Margery had pronounced literary talent, as her book bears witness, packed as it is with aptly narrated scenes and sketches of people she has met. And she has absorbed the narrative of the Gospels as one absorbs a thrilling novel. She identifies herself with every scene and follows the Saviour's life on earth as though she were a contemporary and belonged to His most intimate circle. She is with Mary at Bethlehem and Nazareth, helping her in the nursery and the housework. She accompanies her and the apostles to Golgotha, and after the entombment she goes home with them to the house of John; she persuades Mary to lie down, while Margery goes into the kitchen and makes her a bowl of strong soup. But Mary refuses food; she will do nothing but mourn — until Peter knocks at the door, in such despair at his denial of the Lord that he needs consolation even more than she herself. Then Mary rises from her bed and goes out to him: 'Ah! Peter, dread thee not, for, though thou hast forsaken my sweet Son, He forsook never thee,' she comforts him.

This is an echo of the same words that Margery herself thought she heard from the mouth of Jesus, when in her young days she had her first 'vision.' And when all is said and done, in a way Margery is right, of course, in saying that all good thoughts which occur to us are the voice of God speaking in our soul. Her love of Christ is perfectly sincere, and many of the imaginary conversations she carries on with Him are of great beauty and show deep religious insight. But it is probable that this interweaving of piety and poetical fancy was just what made Margery so naïvely unsuspecting of many of her own weaknesses — her preoccupation with self, her love of asserting herself, her unwillingness to take advice.

To some extent she may indeed have had aural hallucinations, as when she heard celestial music. She was a pronounced psychopath — if by nothing else, this is proved by the violent revolutions of her mind, going from one extreme to another. And after her final conversion her religious emotion was expressed in sobbing and weeping. She herself counted this as a gift of grace, and of course she could quote a number of theological authorities for regarding tears of repentance as a gift of grace. But by degrees her fits of weeping took the form of violent attacks, whenever she approached the sacraments or thought intensely of Christ's life upon earth. She began to shriek wildly — she roared, as she says herself — and often collapsed in convulsions, causing the whole congregation to crowd about her. It is very natural that many priests could discover nothing edifying in such disturbances of divine service and firmly refused to believe that it was God who was responsible for Mistress Kempe's disorderly behavior. And a great part of the congregation thought the woman was only trying to make herself interesting — she was shamming. Or perhaps she suffered from falling sickness.

These attacks of Margery's cannot, however, have been epileptic, for while they lasted she saw and heard everything that was said or went on around her, and she remembered it all clearly afterwards. And even after suffering from them for over twenty years, neither her bodily nor her mental powers were in the slightest degree impaired. She lived her life of religious vagabondage on constant pilgrimages, which must have been extremely fatiguing to an old person, when we consider what the roads and means of transport were like in her day. And all the time she was as receptive as ever to new impressions; she assimilated sermons and religious writings which were read aloud to her — above all, the books of the Bible, but also Walter Hilton's *Scala Perfectionis*

and the English Carthusian mystics. Margery had once visited Lady Julian of Norwich, whom she calls Dame Jelyan, and had stayed with her for several days, during which she accepted advice and guidance from the anchorite, who must at this time have been a very old woman. Margery was also acquainted with the writings of Saint Bridget (of Sweden) and allowed herself to be influenced by them. She herself was unable to read, though she carried her prayer book. But, like so many women of the Middle Ages, she probably managed to read a book the contents of which she knew pretty well by heart, which was not the same thing as spelling her way through works previously unknown to her. Her memoirs were dictated, at the age of something over sixty. All things considered, Margery Kempe was a gifted lady, a decidedly artistic nature, deeply religious and not a little hysterical.

Of course she carried her point and got John Kempe to release her from all the duties she owed him. Her account of her final settlement with her husband makes rather uncanny reading. It took place on the highroad; they were on pilgrimage to York, and she carried the keg of beer, while John had a loaf of bread in his bosom. John Kempe was very unwilling to let her go, but her prayers and fanaticism frightened him so that in the end he had to give in. He showed sufficient practical sense to insist that she should pay a share of their common debts before releasing her and agreeing to her going her own way. Jerusalem was Margery's first goal.

After quite a lot of adventures in England she got away and had a number of remarkable experiences on her way to and from the Holy Land. Margery's talent as a narrator is at its very best in these descriptions of life on the main pilgrim routes and of all the curious types she met with. We must suppose that they were all impelled by a more or less conscious longing for the religious

experience, as well as by the belief that treasures were laid up where neither moth nor rust could corrupt by going on a pilgrimage, which was always a dangerous and somewhat adventurous undertaking. But we must not forget that the people of the Middle Ages knew no other form of holiday travel and 'tourism' than these pilgrimages. And Margery had ample opportunities of learning that by no means every pilgrim cared to be treated to evangelical tales and pious talk *all* the time while thus journeying from one sanctuary to another. Time after time her companions grew thoroughly sick of her and begged her to leave them in peace and be merry and pleasant, at least during mealtimes. Or else they made a start from the inn during the night hours in order to get away from her. So Margery was left behind and had to look for a new set of traveling companions.

There was the young English lady of noble birth who was traveling with a great retinue; at first she was delighted to have the company of the celebrated visionary — but then she came across somebody who criticized Margery and her vagaries, and so the lady backed out of all her promises and declined to be seen in the company of Mistress Kempe. And there was the hunchbacked English beggar, Richard, whom Margery met in Venice and hired as her attendant. After a while he, too, came to hear so many queer things about her that he would not show himself with her in the daytime. Margery was robbed, had to beg her way — then she met people who believed in her mission, were edified by her talking, and gave her generous alms; after which she gave away all she had received and met with fresh adventures. For it must not be thought that the eccentric old Englishwoman lacked adherents. The Franciscans of Jerusalem had made much of her and were anxious to hear about her revelations; they were quite willing to believe it was the Holy Spirit that moved her when she had



convulsive fits of weeping and had to 'roar' whenever she came to a spot where Jesus had passed and suffered. And in the cottages of humble folk by the roadside the old pilgrim woman was often received with touching Christian charity.

She had obtained permission to receive Holy Communion every Sunday — a thing which was not so common in the Middle Ages. But she knew no language but English, so it was often difficult for her to confess. This was then arranged for her by Our Lord through a few little miracles. In Rome He once summoned Saint John the Evangelist so that she might confess to him. Margery said her *Confiteor*, and the apostle gave her absolution and preached a sermon to her — she heard everything he said just as plainly as with her bodily ears, she assures us. Another time she met in the Lateran Church a German priest who took charge of her, and although he did not know a word of English till then, he learned in the course of a fortnight to understand Margery well enough for her to confess to him; but when other English people spoke he did not understand a word. So this too was accounted a great marvel by Margery. In common with many other pious but self-centred people she was very ready to take any strange thing that happened to her as a direct miracle.

#### IV

It is evident that in the eyes of her contemporaries Margery was an irritatingly anomalous phenomenon. Had she been a nun, or had she withdrawn to the cell of an anchorite, she might have behaved as eccentrically as she pleased. But in fact she was the runaway wife of a burgess, who strayed all over the world and foretold coming events. She undoubtedly had the power of seeing through many of her fellow creatures and was able to tell them of their secret sins and weaknesses. Many of them — especially priests who had something to

conceal — took it well, confessed that what she said was true, and begged for her intercession. But others, again of the clergy, were extremely angry. And then she would dress herself entirely in white, and keep unnaturally strict fasts — until she was told by the voice of Jesus within her that this would do for the present and she might eat and drink like other people for a time and take meat and beer on all but fast days. And she was always on the move, and wherever she came she set folks talking about her.

Time after time she was brought before the ecclesiastical courts in England by kind neighbors and the like. They declared that the woman was a dangerous heretic, the worst Lollard in the whole country, and said they would be delighted to fetch wood to burn her. Margery was then examined as to her faith and her doings by a whole series of prelates. Now, we have all heard so much about the victims of the Inquisition that we are apt to overlook the fact that the activities of the Inquisition consisted very largely in exonerating the victims of their neighbors' suspicions and vindictiveness and releasing them with a written declaration that they were to be spared further accusations. It appears from Margery's account of all these examinations that she always met with fair play and honest treatment, even if several of her judges did not disguise their opinion that she was a nuisance and personally an unbearable female. But they admit that her preaching is entirely orthodox and that her piety is certainly sincere and free from hypocrisy. Others feel edified by her words and ask her advice in matters of conscience. Abbots and bishops invite her to dine at their table, 'making much of her' and spending the evening in pious conversation with Margery 'until the stars appeared in the sky.'

She was obliged by ill health to settle again for a few years in her native town, and the good people of Lynn had some-



thing to talk about. It turned out as she had heard it foretold by Our Lord: 'And so shall I be worshipped on earth for thy love, daughter, for I will have the grace that I have shown to thee on earth, known to the world, so that people may wonder at My goodness.' But also: 'Thou shalt be eaten and gnawed by the people of the world as any rat gnaweth stockfish.' She succeeded in dividing the clergy of the town and its neighborhood into two camps — for and against Margery Kempe. The most famous preacher in Lynn was a Franciscan, who was also known for his exemplary life. He refused to believe in Margery's revelations, had no sympathy for her way of living, and finally forbade her to come to the church where he preached, if she could not stop shrieking and making scenes. Margery was afraid it might end in a catastrophe with this friar — he was a model, to be sure, but it sometimes happened that even models fell from grace. On the other hand a number of the young priests in particular seem to have taken her side. This was natural enough in itself; young men who looked back on the harsh years of privation at the grammar school and the university and were faced by a life of celibacy attached themselves to the inspired old woman whom they called 'Mother.' It was in this circle that she found the confessor who for a number of years served also as her reader and secretary.

The idea that it was particularly the vow of celibacy that was sinned against by the bad priests of the Middle Ages is not confirmed by Margery's book — and for that matter it is seldom supported by contemporary documents other than those which are obviously tendentious and aimed precisely at the immorality which of course was found within the Church as elsewhere. The priestly faults that Margery most frequently and mercilessly scourges happen to be her own pet sins — greed of power, arrogance, the desire of honors, and disobedience to superiors.

## V

For many years Margery had not been living with her husband. Then it happened one morning that John Kempe fell downstairs in his house and nearly killed himself. Naturally the neighbors said it was all his wife's fault for running away from him, and that if John Kempe died she ought to be hanged. However, he was sewed up and patched together, but among other injuries he had fractured his skull and he remained an invalid as long as he lived. Margery then took him in and nursed him. He was imbecile and helpless as an infant, so most of her time was spent in keeping him clean — and her money went in fuel, for he had to be kept warm and she used such quantities of hot water; evidently she was fairly poor now. The worst thing to her mind was that she had so little time for prayer and contemplation; she could not even go to church every day. But Christ told her in her soul that she was now serving Him best in nursing her sick husband. So she looked after John as faithfully and affectionately as if he had been Christ Himself.

About this time her son from Danzig came home on a visit and brought his German-born wife with him. He was greatly changed, so pious and serious that Margery could not thank God enough for it. And when, a short time after his return, he fell ill and died, his mother was easy in her mind and of good cheer: he had only come home to Lynn in order to go on to his true home, the land of the living.

John Kempe died not long after, and now Margery's German daughter-in-law wished to return to her family and to her little girl whom she had left behind in Danzig. Margery was to accompany her to Ipswich and see her on board. But when she was there she could not resist her love of travel, and, much against her daughter-in-law's wish and the advice of her confessor, she

insisted on making the voyage to Germany. In one of her spiritual talks with Our Lord she was expressly commanded to go. And 'if God be with us, who can be against us?' Moreover she found a priest who gave her the advice she looked for.

After many adventures by sea and land she reached Danzig at last and parted from her daughter-in-law — to the evident delight of the latter. But Margery had heard about the Precious Blood at Wilsnack in Brandenburg. In that place three Hosts were preserved which were said to have bled. Margery secured a passage to Stralsund with an English merchant who promised to help her on her journey, but when they came ashore he was by no means desirous of keeping his promise. Margery was not one to give in. She did not know the language of the country, she was now over sixty — which in mediæval times was considered a great age — and in addition she was ill; nevertheless she took up her pilgrim's staff and shamed her countryman into going with her. He went in fear during the whole journey — fear of thieves, of bandits in the trackless bogs and forests through which they had to pass, and evidently of Margery too, who constantly had her spiritual talks with Our Lord and who shrieked and wept freely. Now and then the man would walk so fast that Margery was almost broken-winded trying to keep up with him. At last she stopped at a little inn by the roadside; she could not walk another step. Then she hired a conveyance, and so she reached Wilsnack, where she worshiped the blood of Christ with ardent devotion and loud sobbing.

She wished to return overland, as she was subject to seasickness and had little heart for life on board a ship, though, following Our Lord's advice, she always stayed at the bottom of the vessel and kept her cloak over her head so as not to see the waves. She traveled by way of Aix-la-Chapelle, but her journey was attended by endless difficulties. She

could get no one to accompany her, could find no lodging, people were horrid to her, and she had to avoid districts where war was raging. But Margery got there. Between Aix-la-Chapelle and Calais she had the company, off and on, of a party of wild young men, and with them was a young monk who was given to drink and no better than his companions. Margery evidently had a good influence on him and they parted as good friends. Then she got a passage to Dover and proceeded to London. It was on this occasion that she encountered the scoffers who reminded her of the old red-herring story. But there were also many high-born gentlemen and ladies in London who overwhelmed her with kindness, and she went about the town bravely denouncing the sins of its inhabitants — profane swearing, lying, loose living, drink, and luxury in food and dress.

With her account of her return from this journey Margery's autobiography comes to an end. In a final chapter she explains her habitual course of prayer. Of her last days and her death we know nothing.

In one place she calls herself 'one of Our Lord's own secretaries, to whom He has shown His love.' But her firm conviction that by means of her book she would lead innumerable souls to Christ and contribute mightily to the spreading of God's kingdom on earth was not realized, so far as we can tell. The Mount Grace manuscript, which must have been copied from the original as soon as the latter was finished, seems to have been unique. What good she may have done during her long and tempestuous life no one, of course, can now say. But the rediscovered book presents us with an incomparable picture of life at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and the self-portrait of a woman whose nature was a curious compound — of piety and egoism, humility and pride, charity and hardness, talent and hysteria — but who preserved her incredible vitality even in old age.

## UNDER THIRTY

*[What are the aims, the experiences, and the perplexities of the Post-War Generation? The ATLANTIC intends to find out. Space has been reserved for the best letters written by men and women under thirty. The letters should, if possible, be compassed within 650 words, and those published will be paid for. Under special circumstances, anonymity will be preserved. — THE EDITOR]*

### FREEDOM TO WRITE

*Marina Cay, Tortola  
British Virgin Islands*

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

At twenty-nine I seem almost forced to apologize for being happy, for having at least a degree of security, for looking forward with pleasure toward the rest of my life.

I've always wanted to be a writer, but it took a long time to get the necessary freedom. At the Naval Academy (class of '31) academics allowed none, and on resignation I started as a draftsman for Du Pont in Cleveland.

There I started writing, at night, and discovered that I had an urgent desire and no talent. Too, I never considered my job as a stopgap — at least I was soon sent to oversee construction from my plates. This reward stopped writing, for I was taken out of the drafting room and put in charge of a construction project in Pennsylvania. On that job the day could last from eight to thirty-six hours; there was always a night shift to check, and no time for writing.

But just as the construction ended I sold my first story for a hundred dollars and looked forward to going back to drafting and its free nights. Instead the boss offered me a raise and another construction job in Chicago. I resigned.

I haven't a grasshopper complex — I just want to be a writer. With six hundred dollars I got married and went to

find freedom. The British Virgin Islands seemed to offer the most for the least money; it was warm there, but not tropically humid, food and shelter were cheap, and clothes would be a small item.

For six months we suffered on Tortola in a native village with mosquitoes, sand flies, hogs, and neighbors almost unbearable. Then we got a break — a small, uninhabited island with a perfect harbor, sandy beach, and no insects, no neighbors within two miles. We bought it for sixty dollars and built an open sixteen-by-eight-foot shed, and set up housekeeping. A vegetable garden flourished in the virgin soil, our fish trap kept us well supplied. I had freedom and used it.

Luck held — a book of ours won a \$250 prize, another brought a small advance. We had enough money to buy materials for a proper house. With cement and lumber piled roof-high in the shed, we cleared a site of rocks and excavated for a cistern and foundations. Too poor to hire masons or carpenters, we began building concrete forms, mixing and pouring. We planed rough wood into rafters, planked the roof, and put on the galvanized iron. It took six months, and with a dim hurricane lantern, the typewriter on cement bags, we kept on writing — and selling a little.

When the house was finished I was twenty-eight, my wife twenty-four; our

income that year was \$816; we owed no money, had borrowed none. We had shelter from even hurricanes, our garden gave us vegetables steadily, and fish, lobsters, fruit, were free. Four books had been published, a fifth accepted. We had weathered the depressions without bitterness — in fact with great happiness.

Now — in a month — I'll be thirty. This once deserted little cay has become beautiful because we love it and work hard for it. Gradually we've acquired ice, a radio, electricity, plumbing; now at thirty we're ready to tackle two more of our problems: writing and children. We want to earn enough money to give us a full year of writing only what we think is good — nothing else. And we want children to share all this land and sea and sunshine.

We have grown, too; our marriage now is very solid; everything we have — from ambitions to the tiller of our sailboat — is equally shared. We are happy, we are going forward — the years ahead look splendid to us.

ROBB WHITE

### ENGLAND'S WILL

*Hillingdon, Middlesex, England*

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

I am an English youth, not yet nineteen, of limited means, but as I work in a London advertising agency I am fortunate enough to have access to most of your great American magazines and a few of your newspapers. Thus I have some idea of your attitude towards world affairs, and it occurs to me, having just read the latest *Atlantic Monthly*, that my opinions, as a typical young man-in-the-street, may be of interest to you.

Yesterday I went to Waterloo to cheer Their Majesties the King and Queen as they left on the first stage of their journey to Canada and the U. S. A., and in company with millions of others, some lining the royal route, and many

more by their radio sets, I felt that this historic journey would cement the already unshakable friendship between our two nations. Our King and Queen are very dear to us all over here, and it is a strong sign of the faith we have in you that we feel not the slightest fear for their safety as we watch them go.

The attitude of the English men and women towards foreign affairs has changed drastically in the last few months. Our motto last September during those ghastly weeks of crisis was peace at any price: let Hitler have Sudetenland, let him have anything he wants, but don't let's fight him. It is very different now; the anti-German — or perhaps I should say 'anti-Hit-and-Muss' — feeling is running so high in this country that the government has been forced to introduce conscription to satisfy the *people*. That statement should not be misunderstood. No one in England wants war, but no one is now prepared to pay any price for peace. The dictators must be stopped, and if they lack the good sense to apply the brake themselves, the democracies will do it for them.

I have said that to satisfy the people the government has been forced to introduce conscription. That is so, and although the strong opposition of the socialist spokesmen might give a different impression, practically everyone in Britain, including eligible conscripts and the average socialist, strongly supports the moderate measure of military training that every fit young man of twenty must undergo. Six months' discipline with good plain food, regular hours, and plenty of physical training will improve the health of the body and mind, and send one back fresh and fit to the regular job that is waiting.

Having read my previous paragraphs, you may have got the impression that the possibility of war is the only thing that anybody ever thinks about in England. This is, of course, entirely wrong,

as anyone would realize if he had seen the great crowds flocking to Wembley yesterday from all over the country for the Rugby League Cup Final, or the even greater crowds who watched the Association Football Cup Final at the same stadium a week earlier.

Playing or watching games is the Englishman's greatest pleasure, and woe betide anyone who tries to stop him.

DONALD J. WEBB

## WALNUTS FOR SALE

*Pomona, California*

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*:—

When I graduated from high school six years ago we were in the midst of the depression. Not being able to find work, I bought a small bakery and delicatessen. The location was very poor, and the business was worse. Some time afterwards a traveling man who called upon us asked if we could buy from the ranchers enough walnut meats to supply his company with a hundred pounds a week. I put a sign in front of the shop, and it was not long before we had more than enough to supply his firm.

We went to Los Angeles to find a market for the oversupply. On finding that there was unlimited demand for walnut meats we then began to advertise in newspapers throughout Southern California wherever walnuts were raised. It was only a season until we bought so many we needed larger quarters. By that time we were able to sell out our bakery-delicatessen business, and we devoted our time exclusively to buying, grading, and wholesaling walnut meats. We toured the countryside and neighboring communities leaving thousands of business cards. In this manner we were able to make customers by calling upon them personally.

By making friends with our customers we found they would come for miles to sell us their entire crop. This is our fourth season, and we are buying and wholesaling walnut meats by the tons. Previously walnuts were mostly sold in the shell to the Walnut Growers' Association. At that time there was little outlet in our community for cracked nuts. But now ranchers who have time on their hands, wishing to make more money out of their walnuts, are cracking them. All the nut meats we buy are cracked by hand by thousands of ranchers.

I mention this not because credit is due me, but because it demonstrates in practical fashion how a person 'under thirty' can overnight strike upon an idea, and, if it is worth while, develop that idea into a business which can be expanded almost without limit.

But this is not the climax. The story has only begun. When an individual is trying to develop a new business he must devote hours of study to marketing, advertising, and so forth, because a business cannot take care of itself. This is where so many of us 'under thirty' fail. We wish to amount to a great deal, but we are not willing to pay the price. If we are business men and remain mediocre it is because we are not continually on the lookout to improve our business management.

In June there were millions of young people turned out of high schools and colleges without immediate work. Let them not become discouraged. If they cannot find a fifteen-dollar-a-week job they may do even better. They may strike upon an idea. It may at first seem foolish because it is new. But if they find there is a demand for what they have in mind, they need not fear. Their idea may make them a fortune.

AUBREY B. HAINES



# WATCH OUT FOR PANAMA

BY R. L. MARTIN

## I

A FRENCHMAN, Ferdinand de Lesseps, dreamed of harnessing the tides of two oceans in a canal; but the United States Army engineers accomplished it. Even now, twenty-five years after its completion, the Panama Canal ranks first among the engineering wonders of the world. As it winds between green, neatly landscaped banks, with only the rough-hewn walls of Culebra Cut recalling dimly the struggle of the builders, it looks deceptively simple and innocent — hardly more than an overgrown ditch, equipped with a few outsize mechanical devices. Its dramatic potentialities are not apparent on the surface. Thus, when the average American watches a newsreel of our battleships steaming through the Panama Canal, he is likely to be more stirred by the mobile power of the fleet than by the 'big ditch' upon which that mobility so greatly depends. He takes the Canal for granted, and supposes its welfare to be automatically assured when he hears that Congress has just voted an extra twenty millions or so to strengthen the Canal defenses.

He does not guess how often the interplay of politics in Washington may put party strategy above patriotic needs. At present, for instance, there is no comprehensive treaty in force between the United States and the Republic of Panama, and the rent payments on the Panama Canal for the last three years repose in the Treasury at Washington instead of Panama City. This confused

situation has helped to intensify an atmosphere favorable to would-be trouble-makers.

The Panama Canal is at once the greatest trade route on earth and the stronghold which permits the United States to maintain first place among the world powers. Long ago William Paterson, the canny Scot who founded the Bank of England, saw that he who held Panama held 'the key of the commerce of the world.' And the British, incidentally, were the first to take a hand in negotiating the treaty under which the United States agreed to extend the benefits of the Canal in peacetime to ships of all nations, at a charge just sufficient to cover the maintenance of the Canal itself. Since every ship using the Canal saves thousands of miles at sea, and the saving in commercial time and operating expenses far exceeds the Canal toll, it becomes apparent that the real cost of the Canal to foreign merchant vessels is a little less than nothing. After nearly twenty years of such free traffic, there is no question but that some nations have ceased to think of this as a privilege and have come — perhaps quite humanly — to regard it as an inborn right.

Possibly they have forgotten that the formal opening of the Canal as an international highway was delayed until 1920 — fully six years after the first vessel moved through the locks in 1914 — because of the delicate problems of neutrality and later of active defense which the World War imposed upon the United

States. It is true that during the twenties, when trade was booming and the United States was scrapping battleships in fulfillment of disarmament promises, the basic military purpose of the Canal was largely overlooked by everyone except the officials directly responsible for its care.

In a world made nervous again by talk of war, the military significance of the Canal tends to-day, as in 1914, to outweigh its importance as a world trade route. As usual, the dictator nations are proving to be the most active and the most tactless of our guests. Where agents of other countries will devote themselves to spying on our military installations if possible, it is evident that the Germans, and more especially the Italians, are also attempting to create somewhat the same type of embarrassment for the United States in Panama as they have done for Britain in Egypt and the Moslem East. Possibly with an eye to the future, they have already been able to ingratiate themselves with certain influential personages on the spot. At the same time that they are developing latent feeling against the military power of the United States, they seem to be instructing Panama's politicians how to exploit the possibilities of President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy. Already the situation has played so far into their hands that an Administration-sponsored bill was lately introduced into our House of Representatives which would lend a million and a half dollars to the Panamanian Government to construct a United States military highway leading to a new United States military airfield in southern Panama. It seems reckless to let so important a road be built without subjecting it to Army supervision and specifications.

The recent remarks by Virginio Gayda, Mussolini's official spokesman, to the effect that the Fascist frontier is now in Panama were regarded by most Americans as a mere retort discourteous to

statements attributed to President Roosevelt that the United States frontier is on the Rhine. Though the Fascist jibe made headlines, and produced amusement or indignation according to the temperament of the reader, it was discounted by the general public — as no doubt it was intended to be. Only persons who have spent some time on the Isthmus realized that Gayda's words implied a sober warning to the United States to concentrate on straightening out its own back yard before adventuring overseas.

From a purely geographical point of view, the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis does cut directly across the Isthmus of Panama. The fact is obvious enough if one stops to think of it. For the much-publicized axis is actually a world-wide coöperative venture of three 'have-not' powers in the fields of politics, economics, and military intelligence, while the Panama Canal is the crossroads of the world, in addition to being the most vital single factor in the military defense of the United States to-day. At present five to six hundred ships on an average pass through its giant locks each month. During the three-year period ended June 30, 1937, the ocean-going vessels employing the Canal were of 34 nationalities, with United States ships forming 37 per cent of the total number. About 28 per cent of the cargo was in the United States intercoastal trade, which has since been largely discontinued by action of President Roosevelt's Maritime Board; so that the sum total of American commerce through the Canal is still less in comparison to foreign nations than in 1937. Thus it is evident that on the commercial side the Canal has become primarily an international rather than a national highway — a fact which is reflected in the increasingly cosmopolitan character of Panama's chief cities. Furthermore, the Canal Zone has become a central junction for air travel moving north and south.

While the small army of United States civil and military employees which ad-

ministers the Canal remains quite solidly American in outlook, there is no question but that various long-range schemes of Fascist hegemony and Fascist commercial expansion in the most varied sections of the world float at one time or another through those winding waterways. Agents of all three powers of the Fascist axis are believed to meet in transit on the Isthmus to-day, exchange orders, plans, or information in forms not always readily detectable, and presently drift away to other points of the compass. Some few remain and take refuge in the Panamanian hinterland, where the authority of the Canal Zone military police cannot easily follow them.

## II

With the general increase in world tension and world-wide espionage efforts to-day, it is a fact that such dubious traffic has increased at every important artery of world travel. Panama enjoys no special immunity; but on the contrary, because of its geographical convenience as well as the new defense measures now being planned by the United States, the fugitive activities of foreign agents there may be expected to multiply still further. It is estimated with authority that every vessel of the axis powers traversing the Canal, as well as some flying other flags, carries at least one representative of the military intelligence of a foreign nation aboard. He is seldom a conspicuous individual. Sometimes he is an ordinary seaman, an oiler, or a fireman.

There are literally hundreds of casual ways in a seaport town that questionable information may be transferred, many of them picturesque or fantastic, but arguing a high degree of skill in transmission. Since the data exchanged are not necessarily related to espionage on the Isthmus itself, but may deal with matters as far afield as China or Patagonia, the persons concerned cannot always be prosecuted by local authorities, even if it

were always possible to spot them. The Japanese, being more noticeable than others by reason of their color, tend mainly to keep to themselves, and to delegate the better part of their activities to their Aryan colleagues of Italy and Germany.

Such things are perhaps to be expected nowadays, and there is nothing alarmist in calling attention to them. In times like these it is impossible that the Canal Zone and the adjacent Republic of Panama should not to some extent become a crossroads for activities foreign to the aims of the United States. Spy scares are headlined with growing frequency in the Panama newspapers; and though they are sometimes merely funny — as when a recent alarm turned out to be only a superstitious Indian woman burying a love potion at midnight in the accidental vicinity of our fortifications — they cannot always be so easily laughed off. In spite of extensive precautions by our own officials, it is difficult to see how espionage against our military installations can be completely controlled as long as the same Canal continues to serve for both military and commercial purposes.

Last winter's spy trial in Cristobal, after four young Germans had been arrested for taking photographs of undoubted military value in a fortified region near the Canal, was evidently aimed at discouraging amateurs and preventing foreign nations from regarding Panama as a handy training ground for promising youthful spies. During the trial, testimony was brought forward to the effect that the principal defendant confided his photographs 'for safekeeping' to Kurt Lindenburg, the German Consul in Cristobal.

Since there is no law now operative which permits conviction of spies in peacetime on grounds of *damage* alone, it was necessary for the prosecution to build up its case on grounds of *intention to damage* the United States — a process verging on the metaphysical. Otherwise

the only charge that could legally have been made against the prisoners, who were clearly guilty of something far more serious than loitering, would have been a possible charge of vagrancy, carrying with it a \$25 fine and a thirty-day jail sentence. Perhaps the most striking feature of the trial was that it revealed, quite inadvertently, the weakness of our own existing legislation in defense of military secrets. A law which would have covered the Cristobal affair precisely, making conviction in this case an open-and-shut affair and saving the government the costs of a long-drawn-out, tedious trial, was passed by Congress as far back as January 1938. It is not yet operative because President Roosevelt has not signed it.

Less spectacular, but symptomatic of the weakness of our diplomatic lines of defense in the Caribbean area, is the way in which propaganda in the Republic of Panama is succeeding in stirring up sentiments hostile to United States business and military establishments and kindly to Italian and German trade and political methods. For the last thirty years, Panamanian merchants and politicians have complained from time to time about the rôle of the United States Commissaries in the duty-free Canal Zone. Although the United States has restricted Commissary sales to civilians more sharply than ever within the past two years, and has forbidden any individuals not directly employed by our government to reside in the Zone, small appreciation of these gestures has been evinced. On the contrary, the Government of Panama has imposed discriminative restrictions and taxes upon United States business firms in the Republic proper, notably in the case of American banks.

Last winter I talked with a number of Panamanian politicians who — forgetting they owed their very existence as a class to the recognition which the United States accorded to newborn Panama in 1903 — told me flatly that the Canal

was proving less profitable than it should to Panama, and that Panama's 'sovereign dignity' was not receiving sufficient deference. It was easy to see how, in some cases, this point of view might in time develop into real disaffection and even possible acts of sabotage against the United States, provided inducements were offered by other agencies in time of crisis. Oddly enough, this type of 'patriotism' is being cultivated by so-called Liberal as well as Fascist influences in the Republic. Black Shirt and Nazi as well as Communist-front organizations hold meetings in Panama as freely as in the United States, with the Fascist groups at present rather in the ascendant.

During the past year, Dr. Harmodio Arias, an ex-president of Panama whose brother is Panama's Minister to Italy, acquired a leading newspaper, the *Panama American*. Although the English-language portion of the paper reads as if inspired by some of our own radical New Dealers, the Spanish-language section, chiefly read by Panamanians, is devoted to boosting the Fascist stock, politically and commercially. On April 2, for instance, a long and flattering article appeared about Dr. Hans Dieckhoff, who was described rather ambiguously as 'the last German Ambassador to Washington.' Regular editorials in Spanish in the *Panama Star-Herald*, signed Leo Pardo, are the work of a Venezuelan whose real name is Manuel F. Rodriguez, and who under pretext of attacking Communism takes every opportunity to create sympathy for Germany and Italy.

Shortly before our fleet went through the Canal in January, the *Panama American* took occasion to reprint in both English and Spanish a little pamphlet written some years ago by a certain August Dziuk. Herr Dziuk is a naturalized Panamanian of German birth, who was interned in the United States as an enemy alien during the World War and who, in his present capacity of commission merchant in Panama City, has



occasionally acted as agent in Latin America for the German munitions firm of Krupp. His pamphlet described a dream he claims to have had, all about the destruction of the Panama Canal by the Japanese in 1956, during a great war in which the United States finds itself deserted by the peoples of the world, including the Panamanians, and is ultimately destroyed as a world power. Thereafter, according to Dziuk, the Canal is repaired and converted into a truly international highway, with the Panamanian Government operating it and pocketing the tolls. In reviving this forgotten masterpiece, the *Panama American* editorially expressed its disgust for Herr Dziuk's apocalyptic vision, but at the same time succeeded in giving wide circulation in Panama to what, under the guise of fantasy, is actually one of the most vicious propaganda attacks on the United States ever written.

By dwelling on minor grievances until they assume the proportions of major injuries, by appealing to race feeling, envy, and exaggerated nationalism, and, most fantastic of all, by instilling the vain hope that Panama might one day, with the help of the Fascist powers, be able to collect Canal tolls for itself, a dangerously reckless state of mind might be developed in time among some of the more impressionable Panamanian politicians. At best, they are inclined to interpret the claims of Panama's independence, achieved in the Revolution of 1903 against Colombia, somewhat more literally than realistically. For the present, the political clique in power there does not seem averse to extracting what profit it can from flirting privately with the Fascists, while flirting publicly with the New Deal.

### III

Without meaning to discount in any sense the polite doctrine of independent sovereignty, one must admit that little Panama, by reason of its strategic posi-

tion on the Isthmus, seems to have been created in perpetuity for the rôle of a protectorate. With an area of 33,667 square miles and a population of 467,459 persons, an area only slightly larger than our State of Maine and a population somewhat more than half as large, this tropical republic has necessarily been regarded since its birth in 1903 as a virtual protectorate of the United States. All of its trade moves through the United States ports of Cristobal and Balboa; and perhaps its most stable source of income, apart from customs duties, has been the \$250,000 per year which the United States originally agreed to pay as rent for the strip of fortified jungle and sea, ten miles wide and fifty miles long from deep water to deep water, that contains the Panama Canal Zone and adjacent islands.

Under a treaty concluded in 1903, the United States was accorded the right of eminent domain, permitting it to rent or purchase any land in Panama that proved necessary for the defense of the Canal. It has also enjoyed, though seldom overtly exercised, the right to intervene to maintain order in Panama, whenever anything threatened to interrupt the even flow of traffic across the Isthmus. When one realizes that the width of a single street is all that separates the restless capital of Panama from the Pacific port of entry to the Canal, the reasons for such a precaution become obvious.

Since 1936, however, — the same year, by the way, in which the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis was first made public and its coöperative drive for trade in Latin America began, — little Panama has displayed a puzzling tendency to assert its independence of the United States. During the Pan-American Conference at Buenos Aires in 1936, Panama's delegates took the lead with Mexico's delegates in demanding that non-intervention in the internal affairs of any state be adopted as a cardinal rule of inter-American relations.



Moreover, since 1936 Panama has flatly refused to accept the Canal Zone rent in devaluated dollars, insisting that it was originally promised in gold. This was a point nicely calculated to embarrass official Washington, especially as there seems to have been some justice in the claim. For several years the Panamanian Government has been returning Washington's checks on arrival at the first of January, in spite of the financial strain this gesture imposed upon the smaller country.

The Panama Government's financial pangs culminated recently in an effort to obtain a substantial loan from American and British banks by methods that could only be described as strong-arm. Last August, before the National Assembly convened, Panamanian officials tried to borrow \$600,000 jointly from the National City Bank, the Chase National Bank, and the Royal Bank of Canada — the only foreign banks operating in the Republic. The banks refused politely, declaring that they would gladly lend the money on authorization from the National Assembly, but could not do so merely on the President's signature.

Apparently by way of retaliation, a new banking law was presented to the Assembly in October 1938 and passed after only three debates. This law would have forced the banks in question to purchase up to \$1,200,000 worth of a new \$6,000,000 Panamanian bond issue, in addition to making them invest at least 50 per cent of their total deposits in the Republic of Panama. During the week before the bill was presented, Panamanian bonds in New York shot up 30 points as if by magic.

As a result of numerous protests, the law was soon repealed in its more stringent aspects, but not until it had resulted in the Royal Bank of Canada's closing its doors and moving bag and baggage from the Isthmus. Meanwhile, in the interests of security, the two American banks have transferred their offices from Panamanian territory into

the Canal Zone. Who their successors, if any, in Panama will be, it is impossible to predict; but it has been suggested that the National Bank of Panama, fired by the example of the United States Treasury's proposed loan to Brazil, now aspires to be similarly financed out of United States public funds and to enjoy a clear monopoly of the banking business in Panama.

A rather disturbing sequel to the bank controversy last winter was an amendment to the Panamanian Constitution, placing all financial authority in the hands of the President of the Republic between meetings of the National Assembly, which occur only once in two years. It may be noted in passing that similar extraordinary powers were conferred temporarily on President Lazaro Cardenas of Mexico, during a period in 1937 when *sub rosa* transactions were in progress relative to the operations of a barter pact with Germany, Italy, and Japan.

While there is no evidence that matters have developed quite as far in Panama as in Mexico, still Panama's relations with Germany and especially with Italy have become conspicuously cordial during the last few years. Panama's friendship with Italy was cemented in 1936 by a species of dynastic alliance, when the daughter of President Juan Demostenes Arosemena was civilly married to a secretary of the Italian Legation in Panama, Signor Emanuel Conzani. Since that gentleman had a previous wife and two children in Genoa, his new marriage was not recognized by the Catholic Church. Obligated to resign his post at the Legation, Signor Conzani is still known to maintain close ties with his former colleagues, and to be a leading spirit among the unofficial Black Shirt groups on the Isthmus.

Furthermore, on December 30, 1937, the Panamanian Minister to Germany, Dr. Francisco Villaloz, publicly followed Mussolini's example in supporting Germany's claims for the return of its

colonies. In a New Year's greeting printed by leading Berlin newspapers, he announced that a policy of opposing Germany's desires 'is a threat to world economy and world peace.'

Although his statement was promptly disavowed by the then Foreign Minister of Panama, Dr. José Lefevre, it is instructive to note that Dr. Lefevre has since been replaced, while Dr. Villaloz continues to serve as Minister to Germany. During a recent visit home, Dr. Villaloz brought a decoration from the Nazi Government for President Juan Demostenes Arosemena. He also took occasion to declare, in an interview quoted in both English and Spanish-language sections of the Panama press, that 'competition in Latin American markets would be beneficial to Panama, because it would permit customers to buy at favorable prices and would maintain an equilibrium of interests in the country, *which should not for its own good be absorbed by the economic invasion of one country alone.*' The invader to which he refers is presumably his Good Neighbor, the United States.

In a slightly different connection, it was noticed that Panama's present Foreign Minister, Dr. Narcisso Garay, was repeatedly wined and dined last summer and fall by the Italian Minister to Panama. This occurred during the same weeks that a complete new Constitution for Panama was in process of being drafted. It is not surprising that the finished document was discovered to contain many points of similarity with the Constitution of Fascist Italy. Moreover, it included two notable innovations in the direction of practical dictatorship, one permitting reelection of a president, another increasing the presidential term from four to six years, as in Mexico. Although pressure of one kind or another has so far prevented the new Constitution from being voted upon, there is no guarantee that it may not be adopted at some future time.

While it is doubtful that President

Arosemena has personal expectations of becoming the Mussolini of the Isthmus, the man currently slated to follow him may very well have imbibed such ideas. According to an opinion generally held in Panamanian political circles to-day, that man is Señor Arnulfo Arias, long-time Minister to Italy and younger brother of the ingenious Dr. Harmodio. Such a selection would break a time-honored custom by which an appointment as Minister to Washington has always been the steppingstone to the presidency of Panama; but it would be in line with Dr. Harmodio Arias's policy of establishing a political dynasty in which he still remains the ruling force. Since the Doctor is already past fifty, his brother, who is more than ten years younger, might be expected under proper guidance to perpetuate the family name and authority for a number of years to come.

Dr. Harmodio Arias is a shrewd and agile politico, and incidentally one of the wealthiest men in Panama to-day. Like many aspiring dictators, he is small in stature. In 1931 he engineered the revolution that brought him to power as the leader of the socialistic Acción Comunal and the self-appointed champion of the common man. Even before taking office as President in 1932, he had already ditched the Acción Comunal in favor of the newly created Doctrinary Liberal Party, which he likewise abandoned in founding the National Revolutionary Party in 1936 — incidentally borrowing the name of Mexico's official political party at that time. Five minutes after being sworn in as President in 1932, he cried, literally with tears in his eyes, 'I did not want this! I am only obeying the will of the people!'

During his first two years of office, Dr. Arias ran the country pretty well, being advised in many respects by his Comptroller General, the late Dr. Martin F. Sosa, previously on the staff of the Guarantee Trust Company. Late in 1934, Dr. Arias first sent his brother and

trusted confidant as Minister to Italy. It was not until Arnulfo Arias returned from Italy in 1935 that the political fireworks began in Panama which led to the founding of the National Revolutionary Party and the forcible outlawing of all other parties. Since that time the country has operated strictly under a one-party system, with vigorous police measures being applied to aspiring rivals.

It is an amusing sidelight on Panamanian politics that during the now-forgotten disorders of 1931 Dr. Arias should have ordered Juan Demostenes Arosemena to be arrested and put to sweeping out the jail in Panama City. To-day President Arosemena owes his position largely to the forceful support of Dr. Arias, and their sympathies appear to coincide on practically every point.

#### IV

One of Arosemena's first acts as President was to convert the Panamanian police force into a national army which, tiny though it is, nevertheless exists in defiance of the 1903 treaty with the United States. This 'army' of 69 officers and 750 men was apparently authorized in the expectation that a new treaty, presented on March 2, 1936 to the Senate of the United States, would be ratified. Article X of that treaty provides that, in the event of a military threat against the Panama Canal, any measure which it appears essential for the United States Government to take in defending the approaches to the Canal via Panamanian territory 'will be the subject of consultation between the two countries.' This, in effect, would provide for military coöperation on an equal footing between the two countries.

Since the Panamanian army could not help us much in an emergency, and since President Arosemena and his probable successor have been exposed to the siren songs of European dictators, it would be a strange thing for us to risk inevitable delay as well as the precise revelation of

United States defense plans in wartime to persons of uncertain loyalty. For this reason, and others that can be specified, it is perhaps fortunate that the United States Senate has not yet chosen to ratify that particular treaty, the fate of which appears to be something of a mystery in Washington to-day.

The history of the new treaty has been lengthy, and its end is not yet in sight. Negotiations on the subject were officially begun in 1934, following a visit by Dr. Harmodio Arias, then President of Panama, to President Roosevelt in Washington. Mr. Sumner Welles, our Undersecretary of State, and Dr. Ricardo Alfaro, then Panama's Minister to Washington, headed the commissions for drafting the treaty. A total of 109 formal meetings took place, not counting hundreds of informal sessions, before the slender document was finally completed. If the amount of time consumed by those discussions is any sign of the way future consultations provided for under the treaty will be handled, it seems as if Gatun Dam could be in ruins before the two nations had even agreed on the location of anti-aircraft guns in Panama.

On March 2, 1936 this treaty was signed by the assembled diplomats in Washington, and in December of that year it was ratified after much debate by the Panamanian National Assembly. The reactions of our own Congress are somewhat more obscure. During the last session of the 75th Congress, a New Deal majority on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported favorably on the treaty; but the Senate body failed to take any action on it pro or con. With the opening of the 76th Congress, the matter has once more been referred back to committee, where it rests to-day. Members of the Senate Foreign Relations group, when interviewed on the subject, said merely that it appeared to be indefinitely postponed by the pressure of other business; but from informed sources it was learned that a pitched battle on the Panama Treaty had devel-

oped inside the Committee itself, with Senators Borah and Johnson leading the patriotic opposition.

No copies of the treaty and attached correspondence could be obtained in Washington, although it was fully published several years ago in the Panamanian press. A careful reading shows it to be indeed a remarkable document, more like an exchange of diplomatic amenities than a realistic solution of the defense problems that face the United States in Panama. In the main, it is a nontechnical document, becoming precise only where it treats of mercantile and territorial concessions directly profitable to the Panamanians. On so serious a thing as the status of the Canal in wartime it is strangely vague, in Article II committing both countries to 'preserve the neutrality of the Canal' and failing to mention that the Canal would cease to be neutral if the United States ever became involved in another war.

In Article VI of this liberal treaty, the United States renounces its guarantee of Panamanian independence, along with the right to intervene to maintain order in the cities of Panama and Colon. Article VIII would grant Panama a corridor through the Canal Zone, with the right of building a highway there and installing foreign telephone and telegraph lines in the immediate vicinity of United States fortifications. Again, in Article VI the United States renounces the right of eminent domain, by which it was permitted to rent or purchase lands in Panama necessary to the defense of the Canal. In the future, all such questions would be negotiated separately by diplomats, and subject to the generosity of the powers that be in Panama.

As a matter of fact, the Panamanian Government has always been scrupulously compensated for such expropriations as have proved necessary to the outlying defenses of the Canal. It is conceivable, however, that emergencies could arise where there might be no time to debate the price in advance, and

where the failure to take prompt action might have fatal results for the United States. Of such distant but possible contingencies the new treaty takes no account. And, since necessity of that sort knows no law, the United States might at some future day be forced to violate its solemn obligations if our Senators should ratify the treaty of March 2, 1936 as it stands.

As for those who drafted the treaty, it must be confessed that the general situation has changed in ways which they did not foresee. In March 1936, Dr. Alfaro was not aware of the Fascist intrigue already under way in Panama, which was to culminate in his own betrayal no later than June 1936 in the manipulated presidential elections, and to make him an exile in Washington to-day. Mr. Sumner Welles, in March 1936, did not anticipate the national defense program under way to-day, which would suffer from possible delays or difficulties in obtaining land or guarantees for new installations. (At least one new airfield and an ammunition dump are contemplated in Panama proper, as well as extension of the defensive road system under United States supervision.) The surprising fact, however, is that Mr. Welles and Dr. Alfaro both appear unwilling to admit the altered situation, and have both gone on record recently for full ratification of the treaty they helped to negotiate.

In hearings before the Senate Military Affairs Committee during January and February, 1939, General Malin Craig, as Chief of Staff of the United States Army, indicated as plainly as the proprieties permitted that defense experts considered the proposed treaty with Panama to be of very doubtful value. His published testimony reads as follows: —

SENATOR LEWIS: General Craig, have you the view of anybody in the State Department [with reference to the treaty], where the results might be such as you have mentioned, inimical to our welfare from a defensive point of view?



**GENERAL CRAIG:** I would not put it that way.

**SENATOR LEWIS:** Do you know if your view has been communicated to the State Department, as to the defensive quality or lack of it?

**GENERAL CRAIG:** My own views have probably not been so communicated.

The reticence of military experts as regards the Panama Treaty and the tactful deletion of some of General Craig's remarks from the record arise undoubtedly from the fact that the treaty as originally sent to Congress was accompanied by a warm recommendation from President Roosevelt. His message described that treaty as 'a fair and equitable solution of the peculiar problems which have arisen between the United States and Panama as a result of the construction of the Panama Canal. They are equally important, however, from the standpoint of our relations with all the American Republics.'

It is probably true that a sound treaty with Panama in 1936 might have helped to inaugurate an era of useful relations with our neighbors to the south. The pity is that the first attempt did not meet requirements, and was so stubbornly insisted upon by the Administration after its weaknesses were pointed out.

Such instruments of policy could be most valuable to us in the present state of world unrest, provided they were clear-cut and definite in stating the joint obligations as well as rights of both parties. From this point of view the Panama Treaty would long ago have merited action of some kind, even if the only result of such action had been to return the treaty for revision.

Because of the prolonged delay which has occurred, the entire status of our present relations with Panama is in a fog. We appear to be operating in part under the 1903 treaty, abrogated in 1924; in part under the new treaty, as regards mercantile matters and roads; and in fact under no treaty at all. With Panama returning our checks for the Canal rental, and insisting upon the promised payments in gold, our very title to the Canal might conceivably be questioned by international jurists.

No objection has been raised in this country to increasing the Canal rental to \$430,000, which is just about \$13,000 more than the equivalent in gold of the former payments and which is provided for under the pending treaty. Neither does anyone object to extending somewhat greater consideration to Panama, especially in matters affecting trade, than was provided in the hastily concluded treaty of 1903, which John Hay himself in his published letters admitted was 'not so advantageous to Panama.' We dare not, however, base our intimate and necessary relations with that country upon the mere presumption of good will, rather than concrete agreements — particularly in view of the European influence that has existed in ruling circles there since the fall of 1935, which is not lessened by our delay in effecting a substantial pact. Only a few months ago, while the Pan-American Conference was meeting in Lima, Peru, a blunt editorial appeared in the newspaper owned and inspired by Dr. Harmodio Arias, stating that if something is not done very soon about the new treaty 'Panama will know where to stand on the question of continental solidarity.'



# THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

THE EDITORS would like to have the Contributors' Club remembered by the best essayists, in this country and abroad. A prize of \$250 is hereby posted for the most distinctive essay of a thousand words submitted to the Club on or before September 1, 1939. If the results are encouraging, this offer will be renewed from month to month. The essays must be in English.

## WIVES AHoy!

AFTER I had been married several years my father, to my despair, gave my husband a sailboat. It was known as a Cape Cod One Designer. I never could remember its dimensions, until my husband once told me it was three times as long as our sofa. *Water Nymph* was written on the stern, and the numbers 33 were sewn on the mainsail. There were twenty or more boats in this class which the owners raced every Monday, every Wednesday, every Saturday. The children's races were on Thursdays. The Yacht Committee could seldom resist calling a special race for Fridays, and every race postponed for impossible weather was posted for Tuesdays. It was a trial to the committee to have so few days in each week.

So there was my calendar, practically slashed in two, half of every day spent on the sea. We lived under a dictatorship, the club commodore in command. We could make no plans social or dental during our entire vacation without consulting that important square of cardboard, our racing schedule. We even had one thumbtacked over the telephone.

The ocean was my barometer. If on a race day the sea was calm, I stepped on the boat a thankful member of the crew; but when it was rough I crumpled up in a miserable heap in the cockpit. By the end of the summer I did not look so apprehensively at whitecaps and was well past the squealing stage when water came over the rail, but on windless days I still felt that alarming clutch on my unreliable innards when the sea rolled about and sent the sails yawing back and forth.

Gradually I learned that all races end, and that despite the agony of countless tacks in a horrid sea, or hours of still-pond-no-more-moving, eventually Number 33 would enter our blessed little cut and anchor in a landlocked harbor.

My husband lived for the start, tack, run, beat, and finish of every race; he also reveled in the post-mortems on shore, when agitated yachtsmen argued about their protests, and tried to prove their points by pushing miniature boats over the club table. Impartial elements, quite often beyond the skipper's control, influence a race; a favorable puff of private wind, an ungovernable drift with the tide, a snarl in the spinnaker, some cuss stealing the wind — and a boat's position can change from first to last, or from last to lead.

It took years for me really to understand this racing business. At last I saw why sails were tinkered with, and boats' positions jockeyed about. I became dependable with the stop watch, usually anticipated the antics of the jib, hauled up the centreboard before anyone bellowed at me, and hoped that I was worth my weight in ballast as I flopped full length on the windward deck. In fact, I stopped lolling about the cockpit like a dummy. I don't suppose even now that I can appreciate what a relief this must have been to my husband. Why, give me a pretty day and all I cared about was winning the race.

Then came the miracle. One July morning I awoke and immediately wished that I had not. A southwester was howling around my sleeping porch; from my pillow I could see the green surf rear up, curl over, hesitate, then come pounding down on the beach. My husband was away. Number 33 had to be sailed or we should lose our season's rating.

I kept reassuring myself, as I dressed, that of course the commodore would blow the whistle and call off the race. It would be crazy to take the fleet out on such a day. Eight-thirty — nine — nine-thirty — and no comforting signal. Nothing but the persistent rush of the wind. Ten o'clock found me on board the *Water Nymph*, a martyr in oilskins, clutching the tiller with two stiffened

arms, my feet braced against a pile of life preservers; an unseasoned sailor aslant the ship, our old captain yelling at me to 'Put her up!' 'Put her off!' 'Luff her!' 'Hard alee!' 'Oh God, madam, pull her the other way!'

We plunged madly behind the starting line, our boat one of twenty wild things that tore across each other's bows and sterns. At last the starting gun was fired. Our lee rail well under water, we rushed close-hauled across the line, nicely placed and straining every inch of canvas and every ounce of strength to hold our own. The bow pounding violently through the waves spanked the waters so far apart that the cold spray was forever soaking us as it forced rivulets from neck to knee.

We neared the first mark, passed one boat; then, jealous of every foot, unflinchingly we forced our right of way and shaved across the bow of Number 55, missing a foul by inches as we swung around the buoy. Then, all sails set, we ran before the wind. I looked back only once, for the angry seas that followed seemed reaching up to swamp us. A sudden gust of wind would lift the mainsail, and fears of jibing stabbed my unnautical soul. We had left one boat behind, its mast a useless, horizontal thing.

Once around the course — oh boy, another chance to gain! Could it be I who sat so straight and felt control over this bucking thing, and not the sea that held command over me?

Two hours, two thrilling hours of this. We didn't win the race, but a different victory was mine.

I now felt more of a mate for my skipper and quite scornful of my former sickly self. I no longer hesitated about joining the yachting circles, but pulled my chair forward and discussed the technicalities of the latest race. A sailor landed on her feet at last.

Long before I thought they were anywhere near old enough, our children spent most of their time in and out of boats in the bay, which meant that I sat for hours at the end of the pier just as if I belonged to some Mothers' Lifesaving Station. When the oldest had learned to sail we bought one of the small One Designers, so that he could race in the junior class. Often in the past I had been skeptical about my own survival of a race, but this was nothing to the fears I felt when our boy first sailed out to sea alone. It was dreadful; first I saw him, then I didn't;

his little boat would teeter on the swell of a big wave, then drop into its hollow out of sight, leaving barely a facecloth of canvas to reassure me that my son was still afloat. With what fixation of eye I followed him, knowing the child was safe only as long as I could see him! How bitterly I blamed the commodore, the boatbuilder, the sailmaker, — in fact, everyone connected with this crazy performance, — for so needlessly endangering my child's life! How could such a little fellow know when to tack and when to come about? Still I had to admit he steered his boat as easily as if he had been a minnow in a school of fish. Why, oh why, hadn't I been dumped in a skiff when I was six and dunked in the bay until all fears of capsizing had been drained out of me? Then the time came when it was not a question of worrying about my child's survival of the sea, but of his position in the fleet. Could he, would he win?

First one child, then the other learned to sail, which meant that eventually all five of us were skippers, though of course we have had to take turns steering. So we have raced merrily along with the years — sometimes we lost, we nearly won, we didn't win, we won. Forgotten results of many seasons' racing, forgotten items on the commodore's record, but unforgettable memories of a great sport of one who, although not a sailor by birth, became a sailor by marriage and found herself the mother of sea urchins.

BEATRICE BILL TALBOT

### REMORSE

CORDELIA was a murderess, but she was also a very good cook, and we were delighted when the verdict of 'not guilty' restored her to our home and kitchen.

'I certainly am glad to have you back, Cordelia,' I said on the first evening, after a supper of fried chicken and hot rolls such as only she could make, 'and I think we all ought to be mighty thankful, since you really did shoot Jake, that things have turned out as they have.'

'Yes'm, I sho' am,' said Cordelia.

'You ought to be grateful to Mr. Brewer, too,' I preached on, 'because if he hadn't been such a good lawyer and known just what to say to the jury —'

'Oh yes, ma'm, he had done fixed the jury,'

said Cordelia, rather missing my meaning but having one of her own. It had been a close call, they said, but I do not believe she had indulged even the most fleeting vision of herself with a rope around her neck. She had always been the most light-hearted and sweet-tempered of human beings, and such she continued to be. I wondered sometimes what Jake could possibly have done to 'aggravate' her so, and I used to speculate a bit, when I would see her light her candle end and start up the back stairs to her remote and solitary bedchamber, on the possibility of his reappearance in a form less simple to deal with than mere flesh and bone; but I honestly believe he left Cordelia's slumbers after her long day's work as untroubled as they deserved to be. Indeed I am being forced — reluctantly, I admit — to modify those extreme views of Conscience I used to hold.

'What must Hitler's nights be like!' exclaimed a friend the other day at breakfast, looking up from the morning paper.

'Nice, I am sure; he sleeps just fine. Do you?' I could not resist saying, for I knew she didn't; not on account of her conscience, but because of the play she was writing. And it may well be that Hitler, himself no mean dramaturge, also finds the hours of darkness more propitious for working out his most telling scenes; but that he lies awake regretting things, I for one do not believe.

Remorse as practised formerly — by Lady Macbeth, for example, or Eugene Aram — has undoubtedly lost its hold on the imagination, and no one misses it more, I imagine, than the writers of fiction. If used at all in literature to-day, it is rather as a convention, and only until some more satisfactory psychological phase can be established in its place. Conscience, either before or after the fact, can no longer be said to make cowards of us all, and I must confess, having been formed in the earlier tradition, that a malefactor untormented by a sense of guilt is to me a very insipid character. I miss the whole setup; the vast pathetic fallacy; nature herself taking a hand in goading the victim and betraying his secret: 'It is a common fancy that nature seems to sleep by night. It is a false fancy, as who should know better than he? . . . There was not a blade of growing grass or corn but watched; and the quieter it was, the more intent and fixed its watch upon him seemed to be.' And how much worse was that for Jonas Chuzzlewit, and

how much better for the reader, than any third degree in a prison cell or a seat in the electric chair!

Personally I should like to go backward instead of forward (for my reading at least) in the conception of guilt and its attendant discomforts: back as far as Orestes, let us say. And now I have to smile, remembering the college girl who was studying *Æschylus* and reported Agamemnon's unhappy children as saying one to another, 'If you don't kill Mother, I will.' That is criticism fresh and cool and rather shuts the door in the face of the Furies.

But while I deplore their banishment from literature I am forced to admit, having known Cordelia, that there is really very little place for them in a busy life. They would have been terribly in her way in the kitchen where the rolls and cakes and biscuits rose light as feathers under her little black hands (I could never picture them holding that dreadful gun), or in the laundry where she sat on Sunday afternoons reading the 'funny paper' to her admirers ('I've got a little learnin', she used to say with modest pride); most of all would they have been in the way when she stood up to get married all over again to a World War veteran and moved to town to live happy ever after on what she called his 'bondage' from the Government.

ANNE GOODWIN WINSLOW

### JED KANE

THE Gauley mail was overdue  
When Jed who was to drive it through  
Cheat Mountain Pass to Staunton Run  
Got special word from Washington —  
In which a postal clerk inquired  
Why Mr. Kane who had been hired  
To drive the course at posthaste rate  
Was not in yet, though three months late.

And now on a high-glazed marble wall  
In the postal building Jed Kane's scrawl  
Hangs framed in silver: 'Respected Sir,  
You ask the reason and this be her —  
If the gable end blown out of hell  
Straight into the drifts of a snow that fell  
Last fall on the ram's-horn point of Cheat  
It would take till Easter for brimstone heat  
To melt a horse path. So I remain,  
Your obdt. svt., Jedson Kane.'

LOUISE McNEILL

### MUCH ADO ABOUT PIGS

'SQUEE-E-E-AL.' A big fat sow let out a sour, moanful note to express the pangs of her hunger. She was already as fat as she could be, but the fatter hogs get, the more ravenous their appetites become.

I awoke with a start. Jumping to my feet, I looked with sleepy eyes at my watch. It said four-thirty. I had overslept by thirty minutes.

This was show day, and on show day at the fair everything else — and especially personal comfort — is forgotten. Show day is the climax of the whole week's work and anticipation. On any other day 'pigs is pigs,' but on show day hogs reign supreme.

I slipped into my pants and shoes. I had slept in the rest of my clothes on a cot beside my hogpens. I dashed out, mixed the feed, and fed the hogs first of all. They had to be fed early so that they would not be full and sluggish and their bellies paunchy when they were presented to the judge.

A few at a time, I drove the hogs to the washing pens. There I gave them a good soaking with a hose. I soaped them down and scrubbed them vigorously with a brush. This was not the first bath they had had that week to make their hair white and their skin pink.

While I washed the animals, my helper cleaned out the pens and bedded them with shiny yellow straw. I drove the hogs to the pens and watched them lie down. Clean and white they were — clean enough to lounge in a parlor! Hogs are really not dirty animals. Their excessive weight makes them hot, and, seeking relief, they naturally turn to water holes and mud wallows to keep cool.

In the pens next to mine were Whitney's hogs. Whitney was a professional ladies' hairdresser. Hogs were his hobby, and he spent his vacation every summer showing them at fairs. 'If some of those high-class society women whose hair I dress should see me out here shampooing a pig, they'd go into a tantrum,' he said.

Farther on were the pens of Brassy, just an ordinary Missouri farmer with some good hogs, who had brought them to the state fair. Then there were the big breeders, men who breed hogs as a profession and who make showing at fairs their business. Several feed companies with unlimited capital maintain huge, aristocratic herds to advertise their feeds.

I had about an hour before the first class was scheduled, so I busied myself in the pens, putting last-minute touches to the hogs. I clipped the hair around their heads, ears, necks, and tails to make them look clean-cut and refined. With a sharp knife I trimmed their hoofs, to make them stand up on their toes and to make their pasterns appear stronger.

Then last of all, with a half-dozen cans of ordinary dime-store talcum, I applied powder all over the entire bodies of the hogs. This made them look clean and white and gave them a well-groomed appearance.

The superintendent of the show called for the first class from the judging arena, 'Chester White aged boar class.' With my keen little driving switch, I made my big thousand-pound boar get up on his feet. I gave him a final brushing down and a drink of water. Even though it was the cool of the early morning and the boar was not very thirsty, he was so fat I knew just driving him to the arena would make him hot; and the hotter a hog gets, the droopier and more sluggish he becomes, so that he does not make a good appearance for the judge.

I knew my boar was a pretty good animal, so I hastened to drive him into the arena first. I wanted the judge to get a good look at him before the onslaught arrived.

My boar moved slowly into the ring. He kept his head down and arched up his back. He sniffed here and there as we walked around the ring.

The judge came over at once and looked down at the boar's broad back, which was carried out evenly to his hindquarters. He noted his deep, well-filled hams. He raised up an ear and saw that the hog's eye was bright and prominent. I squatted by the boar as the judge paused, and rubbed my hand along the deep, smooth sides, and on down to the straight, well-set legs. I wanted to call the attention of the judge to the points in which my boar was particularly strong.

Other boars followed us into the ring. The judge scrutinized them carefully, but somehow I felt that my 'early bird' psychology had given my boar the edge on them.

Then the judge raised his cane into the air. I held my breath, for with the fall of that cane would go the prize. The cane fell, and it was pointed straight at my big boar. The audience cheered, and the superintendent rushed up and handed me the blue ribbon.



Other classes followed for various ages of both boars and sows. I drove my hogs in almost all of them. Sometimes I won, and sometimes I didn't.

Besides showing in the arena, as the weary, hot August day dragged on, I had to see that the hogs in the pens kept cool. I sprinkled them with water. As their breakfast digested, their sides became leaner and made them look lanky, so I added a little more 'fill' to this and that animal.

Misfortune struck during the day, when a big beautiful sow slipped on some wet concrete and hurt her leg. She limped into the arena. I knew she was a good animal and should place well, but, try as I might, the judge would not look at her because of her lameness.

Younger hogs always cause the most trouble. Older ones, after a season or so of experience, learn what is expected of them. But the pigs are green. My junior gilt became hot and tired. She wanted to go back to her pen, where she could lie down. She ran up and down the fence of the arena. When I tried to drive her out into the middle where the judge could see her, she squealed loudly, causing a big fuss.

I tried the old trick of scratching her on the belly. She became quiet, but she also threw up her head and sagged her back. When I stopped scratching to get her to stand well, she again tried to get out of the ring. Finally I had to take her back to the pens.

My junior boar pig was cocky. He was just at that adolescent age when he thought he could whip anything in sight. Accordingly, at the first sight of another pig in the ring, he bristled up his hair, pricked up his ears, and began chewing and foaming at the mouth.

In spite of all I could do, he attacked. Since they were young, the two boars did not have big tusks, but they bit each other, and chewed and ripped each other's ears. They fought fiercely, with all the fury of their ancestor, the wild boar. I tried to beat them apart with a cane. The owner of the other pig and I tried to pull them apart, but they were too strong for us. Finally we had to carry a gate panel into the arena and thrust it between them.

Late in the day came the climax of the show, with the championship classes. I drove my first-prize aged boar in the senior championship class. He posed like the veteran he

was. He stood squarely on four legs, back arched, head down. I emerged with the coveted purple rosette ribbon. Later I drove my boar against the junior champion for the grand champion boar of the show. I used all the tricks in the bag. I pressed my boar for every good point he possessed. But the younger hog was livelier and had more strut, so I lost in the final round.

That night the hog pavilion became very quiet. The tenseness of the atmosphere was gone. The hogs grunted peacefully as they slept. Strings of ribbons, fluttering in the breeze, decorated each breeder's pens.

Here and there under the lights were gathered little groups of men smoking cigars. The smokes were on the man who had won the most prize money that day. The men talked in undertones about the judge, about the placings, and about their winnings. They had settled down to take life easy, for their week's work was done.

CECIL BARGER

### AN OLD SONG

Now does the husbandman go forth with  
grain  
Sheer in the hand to fill the empty furrow,  
Now is life cast back into earth again  
And sowed with joy though it were reaped in  
sorrow.

Now in the cellars the cool sleeping wine  
Remembers the green leaf with sudden start,  
Stirs and is troubled, would return to vine —  
Now does all sleeping love trouble the heart.

In the white hawthorn the small-throated  
thrush  
Repeats his fearful new-discovered joy,  
Bustles and trills till shakes the fragile bush:  
Now silent love must shout like a wild boy.

And in the dark wood the small nightingale  
Sits waiting the sweet terror of his sighs,  
Until his heart is reft by the sharp flail  
And joy or anguish thrusts his throat with  
cries.

Now does the husbandman go forth with  
grain,  
Now in the cellars wakes the sleeping wine,  
Now nightingale and thrush do sing again,  
My love, my love, while I lie here alone.

MAY SARTON





The Atlantic Serial

# *Rogue Male*

by—GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

CHAPTERS IX TO XVII

## Rogue Male . . .

is a novel written in the first person. It is the confession of an English aristocrat with a name internationally known, who appears to have taken little part in politics or society, but to have earned his notoriety through exploration and big-game hunting. 'Lest what I write,' he says, 'should ever, by accident or intention, become public property, I will not mention who I am.'

He became obsessed with the idea of stalking the biggest game of all, a European dictator. He does not tell us whether he went east or west from Poland, his starting point. He was caught when his telescopic sight was coming on to the target.

His claim that he never actually meant to shoot was, naturally enough, considered incredible by the secret police; indeed he himself shows a reticence about his motives which cannot altogether be accounted for by his very English reserve. He was questioned and tortured until some official recognized the name on his passport, and his story of a sporting stalk seemed possible, if unlikely. 'By that time,' he says, with his usual genius for understatement, 'I had, of course, been knocked about very considerably.' So his examiners dared not let him go; they threw him over a cliff and staged his death to look like an accident.

He fell, however, into a patch of bog, and, though partially paralyzed, was able to use his woodcraft to throw off pursuit and to convince the search parties that he had been drowned or had died in thick cover like an animal. Meanwhile he was really making his way to the sea in the guise of a village schoolmaster who had been injured in an automobile accident and advised by his doctor to take a river holiday with a small boat.

He reached London by stowing himself away in a British ship with the aid of the first officer. The next day he visited his attorney, whom he calls Saul, to settle up his affairs, and to warn Saul that he intended to disappear into the wilds for a number of years. The agents of the foreign power, having at last decided that he was alive and traced him to his port of departure, put the lawyer's office under observation and trailed him as soon as he left. He tried to escape from his hunters in the London underground railways, but was cornered and compelled to kill one of them in self-defense.

For the moment he has shaken off the watchers; but he is a marked man, since his torturers stripped his fingertips and burned his left eye. He has to wear a bandage or dark glasses. He will not ask the police or the Foreign Office for help lest he should involve his country in what is his own private affair. He cannot go abroad without leaving a trail that could be followed. He is sitting in the darkness of a cinema, a few hours after the murder in the Aldwych station, and considering where and how he is to hide. . . .

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*With each twelve months of the Atlantic*

**THREE GREAT BOOKS OF THE YEAR**

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# ROGUE MALE

BY GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

## IX

I DECIDED against sleeping at a hotel. My position was becoming so complicated that it seemed wise to occupy neutral territory whence I could move according to circumstance. A hotel porter might compel me into some act or lie that was unnecessary. I took a bus to Wimbledon Common; I had never been there, but knew there was a golf course and some sort of cover where corpses were very frequently discovered — indications of a considerable stretch of country that was open to the public at night.

The Common turned out to be ideal. I spent the night in a grove of silver birch where the fine soil — silver, too, it seemed to me, but the cause was probably the half-moon — held the heat of the day. There is, for me, no better resting place than the temperate forest of Europe. Can one reasonably speak of forest at half an hour from Piccadilly Circus? I think so. The trees and heath are there, and at night one sees no paper bags.

In the morning I brushed off the leaves and bought a paper in a hurry from the local tobacconist as if I were briskly on my way to the City. In my new and too smart clothes I looked the part. 'Aldwych Mystery' was occupying half a column of the centre page. I retired to a seat on the Common before committing myself to further dealings with the public.

The body had been discovered almost as soon as I was clear of the station. Foul play, said the paper cautiously, was suspected. In other words, the police were

wondering how a man who had fallen on his back across the live rail could have suffered a smashing blow in the solar plexus.

The deceased had been identified. He was a Mr. Johns, who lived in a furnished room in those barrack squares of furnished rooms between Millbank and Victoria Station. His age, his friends, his background, were unknown (and, if he knew his job, always would be), but the paper carried an interview with his landlady. She said: —

'He was a real gentleman and I'm sure I don't know why anyone should have done him harm. His poor old mother will be broken-hearted.'

But it appeared that nobody had discovered the address of the poor old mother. The only evidence for her existence was the landlady's statement that she would often telephone Mr. Johns, who thereupon rushed out in a great hurry to see her. I was not, of course, so cynical at the moment; but when the aged mother, such jam for journalists, was not mentioned at all in the evening papers, my conscience was easier.

The police were anxious to interview a well-dressed clean-shaven man in the early forties, with a bruised and blackened eye, who was observed to leave the Aldwych station shortly before the body was discovered, and surrendered a shilling ticket to the collector. I am not yet forty and I was not well dressed, but the description was accurate enough to be unpleasant reading.

It might have been worse. If they had wanted a man with a bandaged head, one of Saul's clerks might have let information leak, and the taxi driver, who had, no doubt, already answered a number of mysterious questions, would have gone to the police. As it was, the public were left with the impression that the man's eye had been injured in the struggle below ground. No one except Saul and Mr. Vaner could suspect that I might be the man concerned. Both of them would assume that the rights and wrongs were for my own conscience to settle rather than the police.

There was nothing for it but to live in the open. I sat on my bench on Wimbledon Common and considered what part of England to choose. The North was the wilder, but since I might have to endure a winter, the rigor of the climate was not inviting. My own county, though I carried the ordnance map in my eye and knew a dozen spots where I could go to ground, had to be avoided. I wonder what my tenants made of the gentleman who, at that time, was doubtless staying at the Red Lion, asking questions, and describing himself as a hiker who had fallen in love with the village. A hideous word — hiker. It has nothing to do with the gentle souls of my youth who wandered in tweeds and stout shoes from pub to pub. But, by God, it fits those bawling Englishwomen whose tight shorts and loose voices are turning every beauty spot in Europe into a Skegness holiday camp.

I chose southern England, with a strong preference for Dorset. It is a remote county, lying as it does between Hampshire, which is becoming an outer suburb, and Devon, which is a playground. I knew one part of the county very well indeed, and, better still, there was no reason for anyone to suppose that I knew it. I had never hunted with the Cattistock. I had no intimate friends nearer than Somerset. The business that had taken me to Dorset was so precious that I kept it to myself.

There are times when I am no more self-conscious than a chimpanzee. I had chosen my destination to within ten yards; yet, that day, I couldn't have told even Saul where I was going. This habit of thinking about myself and my motives has only grown upon me recently. In this confession I have forced myself to analyze; when I write that I did this because of that, it is true. At the time of the action, however, it was not always true; my reasons were insistent but frequently obscure.

Though the precise spot where I was going was no more nor less present in my consciousness than the dark shadows which floated before my left eye, I knew I had to have a fleece-lined, waterproof sleeping bag. I dared not return to the centre of London, so I decided to telephone and have the thing sent C. O. D. to Wimbledon station by a commissionaire.

I spoke to the shop in what I believed to be a fine disguised bass voice, but the senior partner recognized me almost at once. Either I gave myself away by showing too much knowledge of his stock, or my sentence rhythm is unmistakable.

'Another trip, sir, I suppose?'

I could imagine him rubbing his hands with satisfaction at my continued custom.

He mentioned my name six times in one minute of ejaculations. He bumbled like a fatherly butler receiving the prodigal son.

I had to think quickly. To deny my identity would evidently cause a greater mystery than to admit it. I felt pretty safe with him. He was one of the few dozen black-coated, archbishoplike tradesmen of the West End — tailors, gunsmiths, bootmakers, hatters — who would die of shame rather than betray the confidence of a customer, to whom neither the law nor the certainty of a bad debt is as anything compared to the pride of serving the aristocracy.

'Can anyone hear you?' I asked him.

I thought he was probably chucking my name about for the benefit of a shop assistant or a customer. These ecclesiasts of Savile Row and Jermyn Street are about the only true dyed-in-the-wool snobs that are left.

He hesitated an instant. I imagined him looking round. I knew the telephone was in the office at the far end of the shop.

'No, sir,' he said with a shade of regret that made me certain he was telling the truth.

I explained to him that I wished no one to know I was in England and that I trusted him to keep my name off his lips and out of his books. He oozed dutifulness — and thoughtfulness too, for after much humming and hawing and excusing himself he asked me if I would like him to bring me some cash together with the sleeping bag. I very possibly had not wished to visit my bank, he said. Wonderful fellow! He assumed without any misgiving at all that his discretion was greater than that of my bank manager. I shouldn't be surprised if it was.

Since I was in for it anyway, I gave him a full list of my requirements: a boy's catapult, a billhook, and the best knife he had; toilet requisites and a rubber basin; a Primus stove and a pan; flannel shirts, heavy trousers and underclothes, and a windproof jacket. Within an hour he was at Wimbledon station in person, with the whole lot neatly strapped into the sleeping bag. I should have liked a firearm of some sort, but it was laying unfair weight on his discretion to ask him not to register or report the sale.

# X

I took a train to Guildford, and thence by slow stages to Dorchester, where I arrived about five in the afternoon. I changed after Salisbury, where a friendly porter heaved my roll into an empty carriage on a stopping train without any corridor. By the time we reached the next station I was no longer the well-

dressed man. I had become a holiday-maker with Mr. Vaner's very large and dark sun glasses.

I left my kit at Dorchester station. What transport to take into the green depths of Dorset I hadn't the faintest notion. I couldn't buy a motor vehicle or a horse because of the difficulty of getting rid of it. A derelict car or a wandering horse at once arouses any amount of inquiry. To walk with my unwieldy roll was nearly impossible. To take a bus merely put off the moment when I should have to find more private conveyance.

I waited for an hour, and along came the very vehicle I wanted. I have since noticed that it is quite common on the roads, but this was the first I had seen. A tandem bicycle it was, with Pa and Ma riding and the baby slung alongside in a little sidecar. I should never have dared to carry any offspring of mine in a contraption like that, but I must admit that for a young couple with no nerves and little money it was a sensible way of taking a holiday.

I stood up and yelled to them, pointing frantically at nothing in particular. They dismounted, looked at me with surprise, then at baby, then at the back wheel.

'Sorry to stop you,' I said. 'But might I ask where you bought that thing? Just what I want for me and the missus and the young-un!'

I thought that struck the right note.

'I made it,' said Pa proudly.

He was a boy of about twenty-three or four. He had the perfect self-possession and merry eyes of a craftsman. One can usually spot them, this new generation of craftsmen. They know the world is theirs, and are equally contemptuous of the professed radical and the genteel. They definitely belong in Class X, though I suppose they must learn to speak the part before being recognized by so conservative a nation.

'Are you in the cycle trade?'

'Not me!' he answered with marked



scorn for his present method of transport. 'Aircraft!'

I should have guessed it. The aluminium plating and the curved, beautifully tooled ribs had the professional touch; and two projections at the front of the sidecar, which at first glance I had taken for lamps, were obviously model machine guns. I hope they were for Pa's amusement rather than for the infant's.

'He looks pretty comfortable,' I said to the wife.

She was a sturdy wench in corduroy shorts, with legs so red that the golden hairs showed as continuous fur. Not my taste at all. But my taste is far from eugenic.

'E loves it, don't you, duck?'

She drew him from the sidecar as if uncorking a fat puppy from a riding boot. I take it that she did not get hold of him by the scruff of the neck, but my memory insists that she did. The baby chortled with joy, and made a grab for my dark glasses.

'Now, Rodney, leave the poor gentleman alone!' said his mother.

That was fine. There was a note of Pity the Blind about her voice. Mr. Vaner's glasses had no delicate tints. They turned the world dark blue.

'You wouldn't like to sell it, I suppose?' I asked, handing Pa a cigarette.

'I might when we get home,' he answered cautiously. 'But my home's Leicester.'

I said I was ready to make him an offer for bicycle and sidecar then and there.

'And give up my holiday?' he laughed. 'Not likely, mister!'

'Well, what would it cost?'

'I wouldn't let it go a penny under fifteen quid!'

'I might go to twelve pound ten,' I offered — I'd have gladly offered him fifty for it, but I had to avoid suspicion. 'I expect I could buy the whole thing new for that, but I like your sidecar and the way it's fixed. My wife is a bit nervous, you see, and she'd never put

the nipper in anything that didn't look strong.'

'It is strong,' he said. 'And fifteen quid would be my last word. But I can't sell it you, because what would we do?'

He hesitated and seemed to be summing up me and the bargain. A fine, quick-witted mind he had. Most people would be far too conservative to consider changing a holiday in the middle.

'Haven't anything you'd like to swap?' he asked. 'An old car or rooms at the seaside? We'd like a bit of beach to sit on, but what with doctor's bills and the missus so extravagant . . .'

He gave me a broad wink, but the missus wasn't to be drawn.

'He's a one for kidding!' she informed me happily.

'I've got a beach hut near Weymouth,' I said. 'I'll let you have it free for a fortnight, and ten quid for the combination.'

The missus gave a squeal of joy, and was sternly frowned upon by her husband.

'I don't know as I want a beach hut,' he said, 'and it would be twelve quid. Now we're going to Weymouth to-night. Suppose we did a swap, could we move in right away?'

I told him he certainly could, so long as I could get there ahead of him to fix things up and have the place ready. I said I would see if there was a train.

'Oh, ask for a lift!' he said, as if it were the obvious way of traveling any short distance. 'I'll soon get you one.'

That chap must have had some private countersign to the freemasonry of the road. Personally, I never have the impudence to stop a car on a main road. Why, I don't know. I'm always perfectly willing to give a lift if I am driving.

He let half a dozen cars go by, remarking 'Toffs!' — and then stopped one unerringly. It was a battered Morris, very much occupied by a sporty-looking gent who might have been a bookmaker or a publican. He turned out to be an

employee of the County Council whose job it was to inspect the steam rollers.

'Hey, mister! Can you give my pal a lift to Weymouth?'

'Look sharp, then!' answered the driver cheerily.

I arranged to meet the family at the station at seven-thirty, and got in.

He did the eight miles to Weymouth in a quarter of an hour. I explained that I was hopping ahead to get rooms for the rest of our cycling party when they arrived, and asked him if he knew of any beach huts for rent. He said there weren't any beach huts, and that, what was more, we should find it difficult to get rooms.

'A wonderful season!' he said. 'Sleeping on the beach they were at Bank Holiday!'

This was depressing. I had evidently been rash in my offer for the family combination. I told him that I personally intended to stay some time in Weymouth, and what about a tent or a bungalow or even one of those caravans the steam-roller men slept in?

That amused him like anything.

'Ho!' he said. 'They're county property, they are! They wouldn't let you have one of them things. But I tell you what,' — he lowered his voice confidentially in the manner of the English when they are proposing a deal (it comes, I think, from the national habit of buying and selling in a public bar), — 'I know a trailer you could buy cheap, if you were thinking of buying, that is.'

He drove me to a garage kept by some in-law of his, where there was a whacking great trailer standing in the yard amid a heap of scrap iron. It appeared home-made by some enthusiast who had forgotten, in his passion for roominess and gadgets, that it had to be towed round corners behind a car. The in-law and the steam-roller man showed me over that trailer as if they were a couple of high-powered estate agents selling a mansion. It was a little home from home, they said. And it was! It had everything for

two except the bedding, and it was mine for forty quid. I accepted their price on condition that they threw in the bedding and a cot for Rodney, and towed me then and there to a camp site. They drove me a couple of miles to the east of Weymouth where there was an open field with a dozen tents and trailers. I rented a site for six months from the landowner and told him that friends would be occupying the trailer for the moment, and that I myself hoped to get down for many week-ends in the autumn. He showed no curiosity whatever; if strange beings chose to camp on his land he collected five bob a week from them in advance and never went near them again.

When we got back to the town I had a quick drink with my saviors and vanished. It was nearly eight before I could reach the station. Pa and Ma were leaning disconsolately against the railings.

'Now then, mister,' said my aircraft mechanic, 'time's money, and how about it?'

He was a little peeved at my being late. Evidently he had been thinking the luck too good to be true, and that he wouldn't see me again.

We walked wearily out to the camp site. The trailer was quite enchanting in the gathering dusk, and I damn near gave it to them. Well, at any rate he got his fortnight's holiday rent free and I expect he managed to replace tandem and sidecar for the twelve quid. I said that I should probably be back before the end of his fortnight, but that if I was not, he should give the key to the landowner. I didn't think the trailer could be the object of any inquiry until the six months were up; and by that time I hoped to be out of England.

I rode the beastly combination back to Weymouth, spilling myself into the ditch at the first left-hand corner, for it wasn't easy to get the hang of it. Then I had a meal and, finding that the snack bars and tea shops were still open, filled up the sidecar with a stock of biscuits and a ham, plenty of tinned foods and

fruits, tobacco, and a few bottles of beer and whiskey. At the third shop I entered, a dry-faced spinster gazed into my glasses long and suspiciously, and remarked:—

“Urt your eye, ’ave you?”

I answered unctuously that it was an infliction from birth, and that I feared it was the Lord’s will to take from me the sight of the other eye. She became most sympathetic after that, but I had had my warning.

I cycled through the darkness to Dorchester, arriving there dead-beat about midnight. I picked up my kit and strapped it on the sidecar. Then I pedaled a few miles north into the silence of a valley where the only moving thing was the Frome gurgling and gleaming over the pebbles. I wheeled my combination off the road and into a copse, unpacked, and slept.

The bag was delicious. In a month I had only spent half a night in bed. I slept and slept, brought up to consciousness at intervals by the stirring of leaves or insects, but seizing upon sleep again as effortlessly as pulling a blanket over one’s ears.

It was after ten when I awoke. I lay in my fleece till noon, looking up through the oak leaves to a windy sky and trying to decide whether it was less risky to travel by day or by night. If by day I should arouse no particular curiosity, but my vehicle was so odd that dozens of people would remember having seen it; if by night, anyone who saw me would talk about me for days. But between midnight and three nothing stirs in farm or village. I was prepared to gamble that nobody would see me.

I admitted to myself now where I was going. The road I meant to take was a narrow track along the downs, a remnant of the old Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter used only by farmers’ carts. My meeting with any human being in the darkness was most improbable. Even if I were not alone on the hills I should hear before I was heard.

I remembered how in that wheat field I had cursed the silent approach of cyclists.

## XI

I started at midnight. The first three miles were on a well-used byroad, but I met only one car. I had time to lean my bicycle against a hedge and get over into the field myself. The Roman road was teeming with life: sheep and cows lying on it, rabbits dancing in and out of ancient pits, owls gliding and hooting over the thorn. I carried no light, and was continually upsetting in the ruts, for the space between them was only just wide enough to take my three wheels. Eventually I dismounted and walked.

What with the slow going and losing my way in a maze of tracks and gorse bushes, the hedges were beginning to take shape in the half-light when I coasted down into the vale, crossed the railway, and slipped silently through the sleeping village of Powerstock. It was time to leave the road. In the neighboring fields, so far as I could search them with one eye, — and that still unused to judging perspective, — there was little cover. When I came upon the four walls of a burned and derelict cottage, I laid the tandem in the nettles that covered the old floor and detached the sidecar, which I half hid under bricks and debris. I made no attempt to conceal myself, lying down in the long grass beside a stream. It was a warm, silent day, beginning with a September mist that hung low over the meadows. If anyone saw me, I was really sleeping or pretending to sleep with my head on my arms — a common enough sight by any stream in holiday time.

I reassembled my vehicle in the dusk, and started at eleven. There were no villages, and the only checks were at the crossing of two main roads. The dogs barked and cursed at me as I passed solitary farms and cottages, but I was out of sight before the householders could look out of their windows, if they

ever did. I rode swiftly, for there was much to be done that night.

At half-past twelve I was on the ridge of a half-moon of low rabbit-cropped hills, the horns of which rested upon the sea, enclosing between them a small, lush valley. The outer or northern slopes look down upon the Marshwood Vale. Here I passed out of the chalk into the sandstone; the lanes, worn down by the pack horses of a hundred generations plodding up from the sea on to the dry, hard going of the ridges, were fifteen feet or more below the level of the fields. These trade-worn canyons of red and green upon the flanks of the hills are very dear to me.

I pushed my combination along the ridge until I came to a lane that dived down into the valley. In the dark I could hardly recognize it. I remembered it as a path, deep indeed, but dappled with sunlight; it looked to me now a cleft eroded in desert country, for its bottom was only a cart's width across, and its sides, with the banks, the hedges above them, and young oaks leaping up from the hedge, seemed fifty feet of solid blackness.

I followed it down until another lane crossed at a right angle; this led northwards back to the ridge, where it came up to the surface and branched into two farm tracks. These two tracks appear to be the end and aim of the ancient little highroad, but if you ignore them and walk across an acre of pasture you come to a thick hedge running downhill into the Marshwood Vale. In the heart of this hedge, which I had been seeking all the way from London, the lane reappears. It is not marked on the map. It has not been used, I imagine, for a hundred years.

The deep sandstone cutting, its hedges grown together across the top, is still there; anyone who wishes can dive under the sentinel thorns at the entrance and push his way through and come out in a cross hedge that runs along the foot of the hills. But who would wish? Where there is light the nettles grow as high as a man's shoulder; where there is not, the

lane is choked by deadwood. The interior of the double hedge is of no conceivable use to the two farmers whose boundary fence it is, and nobody but an adventurous child would want to explore it.

That, indeed, was the manner of its finding. In love one becomes a child again. A rock is a cliff, a hedge a forest, a stream a river flowing to God knows what Arcadies. This lane was our discovery, a perilous passage made for us to force. It was only the spring of this year that I took her to England, choosing the Dorset downs to give her the first sight and feeling of the land that was to be her home. It was her last sight, too. I cannot say that we had any sense of premonition, unless the tenseness of our love. There is a desperate sweetness between man and woman when the wings of the four horsemen drone inwards from the corners of their world.

It was now my job to prevent children or lovers from pushing through that way again. I worked the sidecar into the thicket and deposited it in the first bare stretch of lane, where the foliage overhead was so thick that nothing grew but ferns. Then I unpacked the billhook and slashed at the deadwood on the inside of the hedges. I jammed the bicycle crosswise between the banks and piled over it a hedge of thorn that would have stopped a lion. At the lower end of the lane the trailing brambles were sufficient defense, and I reinforced them with a dead holly bush. That was all I dared do for the moment. The light was growing, and the strokes of my hook echoing down the hillside.

I cut steps up the western bank and up the inner side of a young elm; it had a top-heavy branch hanging low over the hedge and within reach of the ground on the farther side. This elm became my way in and out of the lane. I spent most of the day up the tree, whence I had a clear view to the north and west. I wanted to watch the routine of the neighboring farms and to see if I had overlooked any danger.

The field on the east of the lane was rough pasture. An hour after dawn the cows came wandering into it over the skyline, having been driven through a gate which I could not see. Farther to the east was a down where the short turf was only good for sheep. To the west, immediately below my tree, was a forty-acre field of wheat stubble, falling away sharply to a great, gray, prosperous farm with generous barns and a duck pond.

It was as quiet a hillside as any in England. The activities of the farm below me were chiefly in the vale. Of the inhabitants of the farm to the east I saw none, only heard the boy who called the cows home in the evening — which he did without ever entering the pasture. In the lanes of the Marshwood Vale there was little traffic. I saw the postman with his motor bike and red sidecar. I saw the school bus and an occasional car, and a couple of milk lorries bobbing about among the trees to collect the cans set out on wooden platforms by the road or on the pebble bottoms of the streams.

I cut the bracken and scraped out a channel for the stream that ran down the lane after every shower. Then I slung ash poles from bank to bank, — where the distance was a bare six feet, — making a monkey's platform on top of them with twigs and bracken. A day or two later, when I stole some bricks from a tumble-down barn and propped up my poles in the middle, the platform was as strong and dry as a floor of laths.

The eastern bank was full of rabbit holes which ran into the heavy topsoil along the upper level of the sandstone. On this same night I began the work on them which has provided me with shelter from the rain and with a hearth. By morning I had made a hollow about two feet in diameter, and long enough to receive my body. The roof and sides were of earth and the floor of sandstone.

Burrowing into the stone, soft though it was, proved an interminable job; but I found that it was easy to scrape away

the surface, and thus lower the floor inch by inch. In a week I had a shelter to be proud of. The roof had a high vault, packed with clay. The drip trickled down the sides and was caught on two projecting ledges which ran the length of the burrow and were channeled to lead the water into the lane. The floor was three feet below the level of the ledges and crossed by short faggots of ash which kept my sleeping bag from resting on damp stone. The hole was very much the size and shape of two large bathtubs, one inverted upon the other.

As soon as my beard had grown I walked to Beaminster and came back with a knapsack full of groceries, a grill, iron spits, and a short pick, one arm of which was shaped like a miniature battle-axe. I do not know what it was for, but it seemed admirably fitted for working sandstone in a confined space. I aroused no particular interest in Beaminster — a mere untidy holiday-maker with dark glasses — and gave out that I was camping on the hills just across the Somerset border. I had a meal in an inn and read the papers. There was only a passing reference to the Aldwych Mystery. The verdict had been murder by a person or persons unknown. When I climbed down the elm into the lane I felt that I had come home — a half-melancholy sense of slippered relaxation.

I began a routine of sleeping by day and working on the burrow at night. Working by day was too dangerous; someone might walk past the hedge while I was underground, and hear the noise of the pick. There was a morning when I was nearly caught by a party of children picking blackberries on the edge of the pasture.

I ran the hole a good ten feet back into the bank and then drove a gallery to the right, intending only to make a hearth; but I found the stone so split by tree roots and easily worked that I ended the gallery with a beehive grotto in which I could comfortably squat. After some difficult surface measurements (by stick-



ing a pole through the hedge and climbing out to see where the tip had got to) I drove a chimney straight upwards into the centre of a blackberry bush. I could then risk a fire at night and cook fresh food.

All this while I had wondered why it was that I had no trouble with dogs. I was prepared so to frighten any dogs which investigated me that they would never come back, but it appeared that something had already scared them for me; dogs gave the lane a wide berth. The cause was Asmodeus. I observed him first as two ears and two eyes apparently attached to a black branch. When I moved my head, the ears vanished, and when I stood up the rest of him had vanished. I put out some scraps of bully beef behind the branch, and an hour later they too had vanished.

One morning when I had just gone to bed, and was lying with my head out of the burrow chewing biscuits, he slunk on to my platform and watched me, tail gripping the ground, head savage and expectant. He was a thin and powerful tomcat, black, but with many of his hairs ending in a streak of silver, like a smooth-headed Mediterranean beauty just turning gray. I don't think that in his case it was age, but a freak of coloring inherited from some silver ancestor. I threw him a biscuit; he was out of sight while it was still in the air. It had gone, of course, when I woke up, and so had half a tin of bully beef.

He began to consider me as a curious show for his leisure hours, sitting motionless at a safe distance of ten feet. In a few more days he would snatch food from my hand, hissing and bristling if I dared advance the hand to touch him. It was then that I named him Asmodeus, for he could make himself appear the very spirit of hatred and malignity.

I won his friendship with a pheasant's head, attached to the end of a string. I have noticed that what cats most appreciate in a human being is not the ability to produce food, — which they

take for granted, — but his or her entertainment value. Asmodeus took to his toy enthusiastically. In another week he permitted me to stroke him, producing a raucous purr but, in order to save his face, pretending to be asleep. Soon afterwards he started a habit of sleeping in the burrow with me during the day, and hunting while I worked at night. But bully beef was the meat he preferred; no doubt it gave him the maximum nourishment for the minimum effort.

I made two more journeys to Beamister, walking there and back at night and spending the intervening day — after doing my shopping — hidden on a hillside of gorse. From the first expedition I returned with food and paraffin for the Primus; from the second with a glue pot and a small door which I had ordered from the local carpenter.

This door or lid fitted exactly into the entrance to my burrow. On the inside was a stout handle by which I could lift and jam it into position; on the outside was camouflage. I sprinkled over a coating of glue a rough layer of sandstone dust, and on that stuck an arrangement of twigs and dead plants, some of which trailed over the edges of the door so that they masked the outline when it was in place.

As soon as I was satisfied with the door, I practised a drill for effacing myself completely from the lane. The platform was dismantled, the bricks scattered, and the poles thrust into the hedge; my latrine and rubbish pit were covered by a dead thorn, and I myself was inside in the burrow, all in ten minutes. Anyone forcing a way into the lane might or might not notice that some gypsy had been camping there, but could not guess that the place was inhabited at the moment. The only sign was an apparent rabbit hole, a bit artificial in spite of the droppings I scattered round the entrance, which gave me air while I was shut in the burrow.

The tandem bicycle could not be seen. I took it apart and propped the pieces

against the bank, covering them with a mass of dead vegetation. The sidecar was a continual nuisance. I couldn't bury it or take it to bits, and the bright aluminum shone through the brushwood I heaped on it. It was so new and strong that no one could be deceived into thinking it innocently abandoned. Eventually I had to spend a night tearing down my defenses in order to get the thing out of the lane, and half wheeling, half carrying it down to the vale.

I didn't know what on earth to do with it. Wherever I put it, it might be found, and the more remote the place, the more the question as to how it came there. Nor could I waste any time; if I met anyone, he would see my gleaming and awkward burden long before I saw him. Finally I chucked it into a sheltered stream, hoping that the action of water would destroy it; I couldn't.

I am now prepared to spend the first half of the winter where I am, subject to the bottom of the lane being still invisible when the leaves have fallen — which seems probable. I cannot be seen and, if I am careful, I cannot be heard. I avoid chopping wood and risk the noise of my billhook only on one night a week when I fill the inner chamber with brushwood and burn it. This dries out the whole den and gives me a layer of hot ashes on which I can grill at one time whatever store of meat I have.

My dry and tinned food is sufficient, for I have been largely living on the country. There are cobnuts, sloes, and blackberries at my door, and from time to time I extract a bowl of milk from a red cow; she has a great liking for salt, and can be tempted to stand quietly among the domes and ramps of blackberry bush that flank the eastern hedge.

My catapult keeps me supplied with the rabbits I want. It's an inefficient weapon. As one whose hobby is the craft of ballistics, ancient and modern, I ought to be ashamed of myself for depending on rubber when a far better weapon could be made from twisted hair or cord. But

I have a distaste for the whole business. I have to compel myself to shoot a rabbit in these days. After all, it is perfectly justifiable to kill for food.

I am not content, in spite of the fact that this Robinson Crusoe existence ought to suit my temperament pretty well. There is not, any longer, enough to do. I am not affected by loneliness or by the memories of this place. Asmodeus helps there. He is a ridiculous outlet for a lot of sentimentality. I am uncertain of myself. Even this journal, which I was sure would exorcise my misgivings, has settled nothing.

## XII

A month ago I wrote that I did not feel lonely. It was true, and it accounts for my folly. The essence of safety is that a hunted man should feel lonely; then his whole being throws out tendrils, as it were, towards the outer world. He becomes swift to imagine, sensitive as an animal to danger. But I, I was sunk in a gentle, moody preoccupation with my cat and my conscience. Dear God, I might as well have been a retired company director living in a solitary cottage and mildly worried whether his speculations were discovered!

I committed the supreme folly of writing to Saul to send me books. Once my earth was finished, I had too much leisure and no use for it. Besides all my other incoherent dissatisfactions, questions of sex were worrying me.

For me, sex has never been a problem. Like most normal people, I have been able to suppress my desires without difficulty. When there was no need to suppress them, my appreciation has been keen, but my emotions not deeply involved. Indeed, I begin to think that I have never known truly passionate love. I have no doubt that, say, an Italian would consider me the perfect type of frigid Anglo-Saxon.

Why, then, my strong resistance to coming to this lane? I take it that I

showed a resistance, since I refused to admit to myself that this was my destination until I was within twenty miles of it — and that though the double hedge was an excellent hiding place which I was eager to reach. Well, I suppose I wished to save myself pain. But I cannot even remember her face, except that her eyes appeared violet against the tawny skin. And that I know to be a trick of memory, for I have often looked for violet eyes in man and woman and never seen them. I repeat, I was never in love. The proof of it is that I so calmly accepted the destruction of my happiness. I was prepared for it. I begged her to stay in England, or at least, if she felt it her duty to return, to temper her politics with discretion. When I heard that she was dead, I really suffered very little.

I wrote to Saul for books: meaty stuff which I could reread throughout the winter, penetrating with each reading a little further into what the author meant rather than what he said. I did not, of course, sign the letter, but wrote in block capitals, asking him to send the books to Professor Foulsham at a sub post office in Lyme Regis. Foulsham was (and still is, I trust) the professor of Christian Ethics in my day, and it seemed to me that my hairy face looked rather like his. It probably didn't; but it is always well to choose and think oneself into a part.

I did not wish to use Beaminster any more. While the holiday season was still on, my three visits and my account of myself naturally passed unchallenged, but a man who claimed to be still camping on the downs in the gathering gales of October would start any amount of gossip about where he was and why. I picked Lyme Regis because the little town had a winter colony of visitors and strangers presumably attracted no attention.

I had a straggly beard that was quite as convincing as most of those one sees in Bloomsbury. My eye, as a result of

continual washing in dew and lotion, was no longer swollen; it looked odd, but more like a bad glass eye than a wounded. There was nothing in my appearance of a harmless and rather dirty eccentric to arouse the curiosity of the police. As for my other enemies, they had then no more reason to search Dorset than Kamchatka.

I walked to the outskirts of the town in a couple of hours before dawn, and concealed myself during the day in the shrubbery of a large empty house. In the evening I called at the post office, introduced myself as Professor Foulsham, and asked if a parcel of books had come for me. It was one of those small, dark shops that sell stationery and tobacco, and have a back room with the inevitable pot of tea stewing by the fire.

'Sorry! There is no parcel in that name,' said the postmistress.

I asked if there were a letter.

'I think there may be,' she said archly, and reached under the counter for half a dozen letters.

A woman who had been examining a row of dressmaking magazines hung on strings across the window said good-night and opened the door, letting the last of the evening light into the shop. The postmistress stared at me as if her eyes had stuck — shoe-button eyes they were, sharp and nervous.

'There — there's more letters in the back room,' she stammered, and edged through the door into the parlor, still watching me.

I heard frantic whispering, and a girl's voice say: 'Oo, Ma, I couldn't do that!' — followed by a resounding slap.

A schoolgirl of about twelve dashed out of the back room, dived under the flap of the counter, and with one terrified glance at me bolted down the road. The postmistress remained at the threshold of her room, still fascinated by my appearance.

I didn't like the look of things, but what was wrong I couldn't imagine. I was wearing my reach-me-down suit and

a muffler, and had succeeded, I thought, in impersonating a weatherproof don on his hardy way from a tea party. I had left my glasses at home, believing that I should attract less attention without those tremendous blinkers. As a matter of fact it would have made no difference whether I wore them or not.

'Now, madam,' I said severely, 'if you can bring yourself to attend to public business, I should like my letter.'

'Don't you dare come near me!' she squeaked, shrinking back into the doorway.

It was no time for respecting His Majesty's mails. She had dropped the letters behind the wire enclosure which protected her cash and stamps. I reached over it, and took an envelope addressed to Professor Foulsham.

'Kindly satisfy yourself, madam,' I said, seeing that she was mustering courage to scream, 'that this letter is actually addressed to me. I regret that it will be my duty to report your extraordinary behavior. Good afternoon.'

This pomposity, delivered in a most professorial tone, held her with her mouth open long enough for me to move with dignity out of the shop. I jumped on a bus that was running uphill out of the town, and got off it ten minutes later at a crossroads on the Devon and Dorset border. Safe for the moment in the thick cover of a spinney, I opened my letter, hoping it would tell me why a description of me had been circulated to Dorset post offices.

The letter was typewritten and unsigned, but Saul had made his identity certain. He wrote in some such words as these:—

The parrots paid the fisherman. I must not send you books in case they are found and traced to the buyer. If you know nothing of a caravan trailer, write to me again and I will risk it.

About two weeks ago the police tried to find the owner of a trailer near Weymouth. It was a routine inquiry. The camp site was deserted, and the landlord did not wish to be

held responsible for damage done by children who had broken a window and were climbing in and out of the trailer.

The police established that the owner had bought and let the caravan on the same evening, that this was the evening after a man had been found killed in the Aldwych station, and that the owner wore dark glasses.

They then got in touch with a family at Leicester who had rented the thing. They learned that the owner had taken, in exchange for rent, a tandem bicycle and baby's sidecar, and that he had told a lot of complicated untruths to account for himself.

A woman in Weymouth from whom he bought food is sure that under his glasses one eye was worse than the other, but no one else noticed this.

The man is wanted for murder, but if the case, as I think it must, depends solely on doubtful identification by a ticket collector, no jury would convict. And let me very urgently impress it on you that if the man were a person of good character, if he pleaded self-defense and gave good reason for the attack made upon him, the case would never go to court. I earnestly advise this course. The dead man was a thoroughly undesirable fellow, suspected of being in the pay of a foreign power.

The owner of the trailer is certain to be found and detained, for he is known to be camping or living in the open on the downs near Beaminster. A person who had grown a beard but otherwise answered his description was seen three times at Beaminster before any police inquiries had begun.

I have naturally kept myself fully informed of the Aldwych investigation, and you can take it as certain that the police know as much as I have told you and no more.

He ended with a request to me to burn the letter immediately, which I did.

I had little fear of my burrow's being discovered, and my first reaction was to thank heaven that I now knew the worst and had been warned in time. But then I perceived the full extent of my folly, and its consequences; a desultory search which had spread over the whole of Dorset, and especially over the Dorset downs miles to the northeast of where I really was, would now be concentrated

on the limited patch of country between Beaminster and Lyme Regis.

That part of me which was unconsciously looking after my safety kept count of the minutes (for I dared not stay where I was more than very few) while my conscious mind lived through hours of muddled and panicky thinking. I quite seriously considered taking Saul's advice and telling the police my real name and enough of my trip abroad to account for my disappearance and for the attack upon me in the Aldwych. I forgot that I had worse enemies than the police.

This longing to surrender was very insistent at the time, yet never really came out of the world of dreams. The knowledge that one pack was on my trail had only temporarily excluded fear of the other. There is no animal but man which can be hunted simultaneously by two different packs without the two becoming one; so it is not surprising that all one's sagacity should be at fault.

Reason took over. If I resumed my identity, death or disgrace was certain. And if some unbalanced idiots chose to regard me as a martyr, I had the makings of a first-class international incident. It was my duty to kill myself — or, easier, arrange for myself to be killed incognito — rather than seek protection.

### XIII

The police were at the crossroads ten minutes after I got off the bus. Neither they nor the postmistress's daughter had wasted any time. They switched the headlights of two cars into the spinney where I was, and crashed into the undergrowth.

The immediate future didn't worry me at all. It was already dusk, and I knew that in the dark I could pass through a multitude of policemen and possibly take their boots off as well. I moved quietly away in front of them until I had to break cover, either by crossing the road or by taking to the

downs on the west. I didn't want to cross the road, — it meant that I should lead the chase into my own country, — nor was there any point in stealing away into unknown difficulties. I decided to stay in contact with this lot of police, — about five couple of them there were, — so I jumped on to the stone wall that bounded the spinney and pretended to remain there indecisively. At last one of them saw me and gave a holloa. I broke away into Devonshire down a long, barren slope.

I was magnificently fit as a result of my life in the open and the brisk autumn air. I remember how easily my muscles answered the call I made on them. By God, in all this immobility and carrion thought it does me good to think of the man I was!

I intended to lie still wherever there was a scrap of not too obvious cover and to let the hunt pass me; but I didn't reckon on a young and active inspector who shed his overcoat and seemed able to do the quarter mile in well under sixty seconds. As we neared the bottom of the slope, I had no chance of playing hide and seek in the gorse or vanishing into a hedge. The lead of a hundred and fifty yards which, in the gathering dusk, I had considered ample for my purpose had been reduced to fifty.

I had to keep running — either for a gate that led into another open field, or for a gate beyond which I saw a muddy farm track with water faintly gleaming in the deep hoof marks. I chose the mud, and vaulted the gate into eighteen inches of it. I was bogged, but so would he be, and then endurance could count; he wouldn't be able to give me any more of his cinder-track stuff. I pounded along the track, spattering as much mud as a horse over myself and the hedges. He was now twenty yards behind, and wasting his breath by yelling at me to stop and come quietly.

While he was still in the wet clay, and the rest of the police had just entered it, I pulled out on to a hard surface. The



wall of a farmhouse loomed up ahead; it was built in the usual shape of an E without the centre bar, the house at the back, the barns forming the two wings. It seemed an excellent place for the police to surround and search; they would be kept busy for the next few hours, and the cordon between Lyme Regis and Beaminster, through which I had to pass, would be relaxed.

I looked back. The inspector had dropped back a little; the rest of the hunt I could hear plunging and cursing in the mud. I put on a spurt and dashed round the lower bar of the E. Knowing the general layout of English farms, I was sure that my wanted patch of not too obvious cover would be right at the corner, and it was. I dropped flat on my face in a pattern of mounds and shadows. I couldn't see myself of what they consisted. My head landed in a manure heap with a smell of disinfectant — they had probably been dosing the sheep for worms — and my elbow on an old millstone; there were hurdles, and firewood; the dominating shadow was that of an old mounting block.

The inspector raced round the corner after me and into the open barns, flashing his light on the carts, the piles of fodder, and the cider barrels. As soon as he passed me, I shot out of the yard, crouching and silent, and dropped against the outer wall. I hadn't any luck in minor matters. This time I put my face in a patch of nettles.

The police, a full half minute behind us, dashed into the yard, rallying to their inspector. He was shouting to them to come on, boys, that he had the beggar cornered. The farm and its dogs woke up to the fact that there was a criminal in their midst, and I left the police to their search; it was probably long and exhausting, for there was not, from their point of view, the remotest possibility of my escaping from the three-sided trap into which I had run.

I had no intention of going home. There could be no peace for me in the

lane until I had laid a false scent and knew that the police were following it to the exclusion of all others.

*First:* I had to make a false hiding place and satisfy the police that there I had lived, so that they wouldn't do too thorough a search between Beaminster and Lyme Regis.

*Second:* I must persuade the police that I had left the district for good.

I followed the main road, along which I had come in the bus, back towards Lyme Regis. I say I followed it, — I had to, since I wasn't sure of my direction in the dark, — but I didn't walk on it. I moved parallel, climbing a fence or forcing a hedge about every two hundred yards for three solid miles. It's a major feat of acrobatics to follow a main road without ever setting foot on it, and I began to feel infernally tired.

The high ground to the east of Beaminster, where a new den had to be faked, was twenty miles away. I decided to jump a lorry on the steep hill between Lyme Regis and Charmouth, where I could be pretty sure of getting a lift unknown to the driver.

A mile or so outside the town I cut down into a valley and up the other side towards the steep hairpin bend where heavy traffic had to slow to walking pace. I thought this an ingenious and original scheme, but the police, more mechanically-minded than myself, had thought of it already. At the steepest part of the road was a sergeant with a bicycle, keeping careful watch.

I cursed him heartily and silently, for now I had to go down again to the bottom of the valley, draw him off, and return to the road. My knees were very weary, but there was nothing else for it. I stood in a little copse at the bottom and started yelling bloody murder in a terrified soprano — 'Help!' and 'Let me go!' and 'God, won't anybody come?' and then a succession of hysterical screams that were horrible to hear and quite false. The screams of a terrified woman are rhythmical and wholly unnatural, and

had I imitated them correctly the sergeant would have thought me a ghost or some fool yodeling.

I heard the whine of brakes hastily applied, and several dim figures ran down into the valley as I ran up. I peered over the hedge. The sergeant had gone. A grocer's van and a sports car stood empty by the side of the road. I gave up my original idea of boarding a lorry and took the sports car. I reckoned that I should have the safe use of it for at least twenty-five minutes — ten minutes before the party gave up their search of the wooded bottom, five minutes before they could reach a telephone, and ten more minutes before patrols and police cars could be warned.

Over my head and round my beard I wrapped my muffler. Then I pulled out in front of a noisy milk truck that was banging up the hill, in case the owner should recognize the engine of his own car. It was a fine car. I did the nine twisting miles to Bridport in eleven minutes and ten miles along the Dorchester road in ten minutes. I hated that speed at the time, and I'm ashamed of it.

Three miles from Dorchester I turned to the left and abandoned the car in a neglected footpath, no wider than itself, between high hedges. I stuck ten pounds in the owner's license with penciled apologies (written in block capitals with my left hand) and my sincere hope that the notes would cover his night's lodging and any incidental loss.

It was now midnight. I crossed the down, slunk unseen round a village, and entered the Sydling Valley, which, by the map, appeared to be as remote a dead end as any in Dorset. I spent the rest of the night in a covered stack, sleeping warmly and soundly between the hay and the corrugated iron. The chances of the police finding the car till daylight were negligible.

After a breakfast of blackberries I struck north along the watershed. There was a main road a quarter of a mile to the west. I watched the posting of con-

stables at two crossings. Down in the valley a police car was racing towards Sydling. They made no attempt to watch the grass tracks, being convinced, I think, that criminals from London never go far from roads. No doubt Scotland Yard had exact statistics showing what my next move would be. My theft of a car had put me into the proper gangster pigeonhole — from their point of view, a blatant, self-advertising gangster.

#### XIV

The downs on both sides of the Sydling Valley were country after my own heart: patches of gorse and patches of woodland, connected by straggling hedges which gave me cover from the occasional shepherd or farmer but were not thick enough to compel me to climb them. I assumed that all high ground had been picketed, and reckoned — unnecessarily, I expect — on field glasses as well as eyes.

The valley ended in a great bowl of turf and woodland, crossed by no road and two miles from the village. Dry bottoms ran up from the head of the valley like the sticks of a fan. In any one of them I might very reasonably have been camping since September.

That which I chose had a wood of hazel on one side and of oak on the other. Between them the brown bracken grew waist high, and through the bracken ran a ride of turf upon which the rabbits were feeding and playing. The glade smelt of fox, turf, and rabbit, the sweet musk that lingers in dry valleys where the dew is heavy and the water flows a few feet underground. The only signs of humanity were two ruined cottages, some bundles of cut hazel rods, and a few cartridge cases scattered about the turf.

It was hard to make the place look as if I had lived there for weeks. I distributed widely and messily the corpse of a rabbit that was polluting the atmosphere a little way up the valley. I

fouled and trampled the interior of the cottage, stripped the apple tree, and strewed apple cores and nutshells over the ground. A pile of feathers from a wood pigeon and a rook provided further evidence of my diet. Plucking the ancient remains of a hawk's dinner was the nastiest job of all.

I spent the day sitting in the bracken and waiting for the police, but they refused to find me. Possibly they thought that I had made for the coast. There was, after all, no earthly reason why I should be in the Sydling Valley more than anywhere else. I put the night to good use. First I collected a dozen empty tins from a rubbish heap and piled them in a corner of the cottage; then I went down to sleeping Sydling and did a smash-and-grab raid on the village shop. My objects were to draw the attention of those obstinate police, and to get hold of some dried fish. In this sporting country some damned fool was sure to try bloodhounds on my scent.

In the few seconds at my disposal I couldn't find any kippers or bloaters, but I did get four tins of sardines and a small bag of fertilizer. I raced for the downs while the whole village squawked and muttered and slammed its doors. It was probably the first time in all the history of Sydling that a sudden noise had been heard at night.

As soon as I was back in my cottage I pounded the sardines and fertilizer together, tied up the mixture in the bag, and rubbed the corner of the hearth where I had sat and the wall I had built. Trailing the bag on the end of a string, I laid a drag through the hazels, over the heather on the hilltop, round the oak wood, and into the bracken overlooking the cottage. There I remained, and got some sleep.

In spite of all the assistance I had given them, it was nearly midday before the police discovered the cottages. They moved around in them as respectfully as in church, dusting all likely surfaces for fingerprints. There weren't any. I had

never taken off my gloves. They must have thought they were dealing with an experienced criminal.

Half an hour later a police car came bumping over the turf and decanted an old friend of mine into the cottages. I had quite forgotten that he was now Chief Constable of Dorset. If he had looked closely at those feathers he would have seen at once that a hawk, not a man, had done the killing; but naturally he was leaving the criminology to Scotland Yard, and they weren't likely to go into the fine point of whether the birds had met their death through the plumage of back or breast.

The dry bottom began to look like a meet of the Cattistock. The couple of bloodhounds that I had expected turned up, towing a bloodthirsty maiden lady in their wake. She was encouraging them with yawps and had feet so massive that I could see them clearly at two hundred yards — great brogued boats navigating a green sea. She was followed by half the village of Sydling and a sprinkling of local gentry. Two fellows had turned out on horseback. I felt they should have paid me the compliment of pink coats.

Away went the bloodhounds on the trail of the fertilized sardines, and away I went too; I had a good half hour's law while they followed my bag through the hazels and heather. I crossed the main road — a hasty dash from ditch to ditch while the constable on watch was occupied with the distant beauty of the sea — and slid along the hedges into a great headland of gorse above Cattistock. There I wove so complicated a pattern that boat-footed Artemis must have thought her long-eared darlings were on the line of a hare. I skirted Cattistock and heard the lovely carillon most appropriately chime 'D'ye ken John Peel' at my passage, followed by 'Lead, Kindly Light.' It was half-past five and the dusk was falling. I waded into the Frome, passed under the Great Western Railway, and paddled upstream for a mile or so, taking cover in the rushes

whenever there was anyone to see me. Then I buried the sardines in the gravel at the bottom of the river, and proceeded under my own scent.

I moved slowly westwards, following the lanes but taking no risks — slowly, deliberately slowly, in the technique that I have developed since I became an outlaw. It was nearly four in the morning when I swung myself on to the elm branch that did duty as my front door, and climbed down into the lane. I felt Asmodeus brush against my legs but I could not see him in that safe pit of blackness. That I consider darkness safety sets me, in itself alone, apart from my fellows. Darkness is safety only on condition that all one's enemies are human.

I ate a tremendous breakfast of beef and oatmeal, and set aside my town suit to be made into bags and lashings — all it was now good for. I was relieved to be done with it; it reminded me too forcibly of the newspapers' 'well-dressed man.' Then I slipped into my bag, unwearing, damp-proof citadel of luxury, and slept till nightfall.

When I awoke I felt sufficiently strong and rested to attempt the second feint: to convince the police that I had left the county for good. This was rash, but necessary. I still think it was necessary. If I hadn't gone the bicycle would be in the lane, and the evidence of my presence here a deal stronger than it is.

By the light of two candles — for the battery of the head lamp had run down — I turned to the unholy job of re-assembling the tandem. It was after midnight before I had the machine, entire and unpunctured, clear of the lane, and the thorns replaced in a sufficiently forbidding pattern.

I dressed myself in the warmest of my working clothes, tearing off all distinguishing marks and the maker's name. I put a flask of whiskey in my inside breast pocket, and took plenty of food. I could be away for days without worrying.

By dawn I was past Crewkerne and well into Somerset. It was now time to let myself be seen and to put the police on a trail that obviously led north to Bristol or some little port on the Bristol Channel. I shot through two scattered villages where I gave the early risers a sight to look at and talk about for the rest of the day; then on into the Fosse Way, speeding along the arrow-straight road to Bristol and drawing cheers and laughter from the passing lorry drivers. I was too incredible a sight to be thought a criminal — muddy, bearded, and riding a tandem, as odd a creature as that amusing tramp who used to do tricks on the Halls with a collapsible bicycle.

After showing myself over a mile of main road I was more than ready to hide the bicycle for good and myself till nightfall, but the country on both sides of the great Roman highway was open and unpleasantly short of cover; indeed much of it was below the level of the road. I pedaled on and on in the hope of reaching a wood or heath or quarry. It was all flat land with well-trimmed hedges and shallow drains.

By the side of the road was an empty field of cabbages — one of those melancholy fields with a cinder track leading into them and a tumble-down hut leaning against a pile of refuse. Close to the hut and at a stone's throw from the road was a derelict car. When the only traffic was a cluster of black dots a mile or two away, I lifted the tandem on to my shoulder, to avoid leaving a track, and staggered into the shelter of the hut. I smashed the two sets of handlebars so that the bicycle would lie flat on the ground, and shoved it under the car, afterwards restoring the trampled weeds to a fairly upright position. It will not be found until the car moulders away above it, and then will be indistinguishable from the other rusty debris.

I now had to take cover myself. The hut was too obvious a place. The hedges were inadequate. I dared not risk so much as a quarter-mile walk. There was

nothing for it but to lie on the clay among those blasted cabbages. In the middle of the field I was perfectly safe.

## XV

It was a disgusting day. The flats of England on a gray morning remind me of the classical hell — a featureless landscape where the peewits twitter and the half-alive remember hills and sunshine. And the asphodel of this Hades is the cabbage. To lie among cabbages in my own country should have been nothing after the pain and exposure I suffered during my escape; but it was summer then and it was autumn now. To lie still on a clay soil in a gentle drizzle was exasperating. But safe! If the owner of that vile field had been planting, he'd have stuck his dibber into me before noticing that I wasn't mud.

I was so bored that I was thankful when in the early afternoon a car stopped at the gate into the field, and a party of three policemen crunched up the cinder path. I had been expecting them for hours; they knew that I had been seen on the Fosse Way in the morning, and since then nowhere, so it was certain they would search every possible hiding place along the highway and its byroads. They looked into the hut and into that decaying car. I kept my face well down between my arms, so I don't know whether they even glanced at the cabbage field. Probably not. It was so open and innocent.

There were plenty of cars and cyclists on the road, and the owner of the field, presumably advised that his hut had received a visit from the police, was leaning against it in the company of two friends and looking over his possessions with ruminative pride. I don't suppose there had been so much excitement in the villages since Monmouth's troops were flying from Sedgemoor, foundering their horses in that awful ploughland, and crawling in the muck like me and the worms.

At last the cabbage man went home to his soggy tea and dusk fell and I stood up. I drank a quarter of my flask and struck eastwards away from the road. Cross-country travel in the dark was nearly impossible. I felt my way along drains and hedges, usually circumnavigating three sides of a field before I found the way out of it — and when I did find the way out, it invariably led me into a village or back into the cabbage field.

Perhaps I should have been forced to spend another day among the cabbages if I had not stumbled across a railway line which I followed towards Yeovil, stepping quietly from sleeper to sleeper. Two railway employees passed me walking homewards, but their boots on the ballast gave me ample warning of their approach. I avoided them, and the one train, by lying down at the bottom of the embankment.

A denser darkness on the horizon warned me that I was nearing the massed little houses of Yeovil. It was then about two in the morning, and the byroads were deserted; so I turned south towards the hills. When the slow autumn dawn turned night to mist I could feel the short turf under my feet and see the gleam of chalk and flint wherever man or beast had scraped the escarpment.

I drank at the piped spring which fed a cattle trough, and took refuge in the heart of a wild half acre of gorse and heather. Here I startled an old dog fox, and startled myself, when I came to consider it, a deal more. I flatter myself I am able to get as near to game as any civilized man and most savages; indeed it has been my favorite pursuit since I was given my first air rifle at the age of six, and told — an injunction which with a single exception I have obeyed — that I must never point a gun at anyone. Yet I should certainly not have backed myself to approach within three yards of a fox, even knowing where he was and deliberately stalking him. Oddly enough, it worried me that I had come to move



with such instinctive quietness. I was already on the lookout for all signs of demoralization — morbidly anxious to assure myself that I was losing none of my humanity.

I chose a south bank where short heather was gradually overcoming the turf, laying black springs under its green mattress. The sun promised a mild heat, and I spread out my coat and leather jacket to dry. I dozed sweetly, awakening whenever a bird perched on the gorse or a rabbit scuttered through the runways, but instantly and easily falling asleep again.

A little after midday I woke up for good. There was nothing immediately visible to account for the sudden clarity of my senses, so I peered over the gorse. Upwind were two men strolling along the crest of the hill. One was a sergeant of the Dorset constabulary; the other a small farmer — to judge by the fact that he carried an old-fashioned hammer gun. They passed me within ten yards, the policeman pressing down with firm feet as if searching for a pavement beneath that silent and resilient turf, the farmer plodding along with the slightly bent knees of a man who seldom walks on the flat.

I decided to follow these two solemn wanderers and hear what they had to say. They were discussing me, since the farmer had remarked, apropos of nothing: 'Tis my belief he was over to Zumerzet all the time' — a final and definite pronouncement as of one who should say, 'I believe he went to South America and died there.'

It's curious how much cover there is on the chalk downs. A body of men couldn't move unseen, but a single man can. In the vales of southern England, though they look like woodland from the top of hills, hedges and fences compel the fugitive to go the way of other men, and sooner or later he is forced, as I was, to lie down and pray for the earth to cover him. But on the bare — apparently bare — downs there are prehis-

toric pits and trenches, tree-grown tumps, gorse and the upper edge of coverts, lonely barns and thickets of thorn. And the hedges, where there are any, are either miniature forests or full of gaps.

It was easy to catch them up. They went at an easy pace, stopping every now and then to exchange a few words. The weighty business of conversation could not be disturbed by movement. At last they settled on a gate and leaned over it, contemplating twenty acres of steely-green mangel-wurzels which sloped down to the golden hedges of the vale. I crawled the length of a dry ditch and came within earshot.

The sergeant finished a long mumble with the word 'foreigners,' pronounced loudly and aggressively.

'Err, they bastards!' said the farmer.

The sergeant considered this judicially, turning with deliberation towards his companion and me. He was a uniformed servant of the state, and thus, I imagine, predisposed to diplomacy.

'I wouldn't 'ardly go so far as that,' he said. 'Not that I 'old with furr'ners — but I don't know as I'd go so far as that.'

There was a deal more conversation which I couldn't hear because neither of them was sufficiently excited to raise his voice. The farmer, I think, must have denied that any foreigners ever came to Dorset. The suggestion that they did was almost a criticism on his county.

'I tell 'ee there's been furr'ners askin' for 'm,' said the sergeant. 'And I knows that, because the inspector says to me, 'e says . . .' Then his voice trailed away again.

My two friends marched off across the downs, while I remained in the ditch digesting the scraps of news. I was perturbed, but not surprised. It was natural enough that my enemies should get possession of Scotland Yard's clues to my whereabouts. If dear old Holy George couldn't manage it, then one of their

newspaper correspondents in London could. It wasn't confidential information.

I returned to my form in the heart of the gorse. The early afternoon sun had a dying bite of summer in it, and I was glowing with the exertion of my stalk. At dusk I ate the last of my provisions and drank again at the spring. By good fortune I left untouched the half flask of whiskey that remained. I feared its effect — slight, but enough to give me confidence when my safe return to the lane and my peace of mind throughout the winter depended on moving now with the utmost caution.

The emptiness was infinity, darkness with distance but no shape. The southwest wind swirled over the turf, and the triple line of turf ramparts hung over me like smooth seas traveling through the night. I might have been upon the eastern slopes of the Andes with an empty continent of forest at my feet. I could have wished it so. There I should have felt alone, secure, an impregnable outpost of humanity.

As I dodged and darted home from lane to lane and farmhouse to farmhouse, I couldn't get the sidecar out of my head. I wanted to know if it had been disturbed. Should the police have found it, and taken it from the stream for identification, they might disbelieve the evidence of the cottages — which was good only so long as no one questioned it — and search the country where I really was.

Although it was only a field away from a well-frequented byroad, the sidecar was in a safe place: a muddy little stream flowing between deep banks with the hawthorn arching overhead. It would remain unseen, I thought, for years unless some yokel took it into his head to wade up the bed of the stream or a cow rubbed her way through the bushes.

I entered the water at a cattle wallow, plunging up to my knees in mire, and forced my way under the hawthorn. I couldn't see the sidecar. I was sure of the

place, but it wasn't there. I didn't allow myself to worry yet, but I felt, as a stab of pain, the cold of the water. I pushed on downstream, hoping that the sidecar had been shifted by the force of the current, and knowing very well, as I now remember, that nothing but a winter flood would shift it.

At last I saw it, a faint white bulk in the darkness canted up against a bank of rushes where the stream widened. I was so glad to find it that I didn't hesitate, didn't listen to the intuition that was clamoring to be heard, and being ascribed to nervousness.

I was leaning over the sidecar when a voice quite softly called my name. I straightened up, so astounded and fascinated that for a second I couldn't move. A thin beam of light flashed on my face, and dropped to my heart with a roar and a smashing blow. I was knocked backwards across the baby carriage, pitching with my right side on the mud and my head half under water. I have no memory of falling, only of the light and the simultaneous explosion. I must have been unconscious while I hit the mud, for just so long, I suppose, as my heart took to recover its habit of beating.

I remained collapsed, with eyes staring, trying to pick up the continuity of life. If I had had the energy I should have cackled with crazy laughter; it seemed so very extraordinary to have a beam of light thrust through one's heart and be still alive. I heard my assassin give his ridiculous party war-cry in a low, fervent voice as if praising God for the slaughter of the infidel. Then a car cruised quietly up the road, and I heard a door slam as someone got out. I lay still, uncertain whether the gunman had gone to meet the newcomer or not; he had, for I heard their voices a moment later as they approached the stream, presumably to collect my body. I crawled off through the grass and rushes on the far bank, and bolted for home. I am not ashamed to remember that I was frightened, shocked, careless. To

be shot from ambush is horribly unnerving.

I jumped into my tree and down into the lane, regardless of darting pain whenever I moved my right arm. Then I shut the door of the den behind me and lay down to collect myself. When I had regained a more graceful mastery of my spirit, I lit a candle and explored the damage.

The bullet — from a .45 revolver — had turned on the nickel of the flask in my breast pocket, ploughed sideways through my leather jacket, and come to rest (point foremost, thank God!) in the fleshy part of my right shoulder. It was so near the surface that I squeezed it out with my fingers. The skin was bruised and broken right across my chest, and I felt as if I had been knocked down by a railway engine; but no serious damage had been done.

I understood why the hunter had not even taken the trouble to examine his kill. He had shot along the beam of a flash lamp, seen the bullet strike, and watched the stain of whiskey, which couldn't in artificial light be distinguished from blood, leap to the breast of my coat and spread. It wasn't necessary to pay me any further attention for the moment; he had no use for my pelt or liver.

I patched myself up and lit a pipe, thinking of the fellow who had shot me. He had used a revolver because a rifle couldn't be handled in such thick cover and at so close a range, but his technique showed that he had experience of big game. He had got into my mind. He knew that sooner or later I should have a look at that sidecar. And his gentle calling of my name to make me turn my head was perfect.

They had dispatched a redoubtable emissary. He knew, as the police did not, who I was and what sort of man I was; thus he had been suspicious of my elaborate false trails. He guessed the plain facts: that I had committed a folly in going to Lyme Regis, and that my

jack-in-the-box tricks thereafter were evidence of nothing but my anxiety. Therefore I had some secure hiding place not far from Lyme Regis and almost certainly on the Beaminster side of it. His private search for the sidecar, which he may have been carrying on for weeks, was then concentrated on the right spot. That he found it was due to imagination rather than luck. It had to be near a track or lane; it was probably in wood or water. And I think if I had been he I should have voted for water. There was a pattern in my escape. I had a preference for hiding, traveling, throwing off pursuit by water. Water, as the Spanish would say, was my *querencia*.

Well, he had missed. I think I wrote in some other context which I have forgotten that the Almighty looks after the rogue male. Nevertheless this sportsman (allow him the title, for he must have waited up two or three nights over his bait, and been prepared to wait for many more) would be content. He had discovered the bit of country where I had been hiding, and he could even be pretty sure whereabouts my lair was. My panic-stricken dash through the water meadow showed that I was bolting south. I wouldn't be camping in the marshland; therefore the only place for me was on or just over the semicircle of low hills beyond. All that he had to do was to go into the long grass, as it were, after his wounded beast. The hunt had narrowed from all England to Dorset, from Dorset to the western corner of the county, and from that to four square miles.

I had known that this fate, whether delayed for months or years, was on the way to me; but the tranquillity of my life in the lane had taken the edge off my fear. I had been inclined to brood over my motives and congratulate myself on my superior cleverness, to look back rather than forward. There was, indeed, nothing to look forward to, no activity, no object; so I clung, and cling, to what I have — this lane. I might have

escaped and lived on the country, but sooner or later one pack or the other would run me to earth, and no earth could be so deep and well-disguised as this.

## XVI

It was obvious that, if I stayed where I was, I must completely reverse my policy of keeping the lane closed. The thorns must go, and the place be wide open to inspection while I myself lived underground.

I started on the work immediately. A southwest gale was sweeping down the hillside carrying along with it a solid ceiling of cloud high enough for the rain to drive and sting, so low that the whole sky seemed in movement. I welcomed the rain, for it helped me to obliterate all traces of myself and it would discourage the two men in the car from attempting to follow me up until visibility was better.

The eastern hedge, beneath which my burrow ran, was as wide as a cottage and promised to be as impenetrable in winter as in summer. The western hedge, however, which bounded the ploughed field, had not been allowed to eat up so much land and formed a thinner screen. I built up the weak stretches, thus getting rid of the poles from my platform and a lot of loose brushwood. The holly bush and the larger branches of thorn I shoved into the eastern hedge, hiding the cut ends. I stamped the earth hard down over my rubbish pit, and the water that was now rushing along the bottom of the lane covered pit and floor with a smooth expanse of dead bracken and red sand. I then retired indoors, leaving it to the rain to wash out my footprints. I have never had a chance to dry the clothes in which I was working.

The obliteration was not perfect. Bracken and nettles were crushed, but, since the whole lane was filled with the dying debris of autumn, the traces of my trappings and removals were not very plain. There was a faint but definite

smell. Worst of all, there were the steps cut up the inside of the elm which could not be disguised. If the fellow who was about to go into the covert after me had an observant eye — and I knew he had — he was bound to consider the lane suspicious; but I hoped he would judge his suspicions wrong and conclude that, whether or not I had once lived between the hedges, I had taken to the open and died of my wound.

The door was a faultless piece of camouflage; I had planted around it the same weeds as were over it, and no one could tell which had died with their roots in earth and which with their roots in glue. A few trails of living ivy hung over the door from the hedge.

Thenceforth my way out of the burrow was the chimney. The diameter of its course through the solid sandstone was already sufficient to receive my body; only the last ten feet of broken stone and earth had to be widened. I completed the job that afternoon — a nightmarish job, for my shoulder was painful and I was continually knocking off to rest. Then I would begin to dream of the root or the stone or the water that was beating me, and I would get up again and go to work, half-naked and foul with the red earth, a creature inhuman in mind and body. I think that sometimes I must have worked while asleep. It was the first time that I experienced this dazed and earthy dreaming; it has since become very common.

A queer tunnel it seemed to me when I examined it after a night's sleep. I hadn't attempted to cut through any roots that were thicker than a thumb; I had gone round them. At one point I had tunneled right away from the chimney, and come back to it. This was all to the good. Though the curve demanded odd contortions to get in and out, the roots acted as the rungs of a ladder, and the slope as a sump for water. The mouth was still well hidden under the blackberry bush. The only disaster was that my inner chamber was

now full of wet earth, and I had no means of dumping it elsewhere.

I stared at my face to-day, hoping to see those spiritual attributes which surprised me when I first looked in the fisherman's mirror. I wanted comfort from my face, wanted to know that this torture, like the last, had refined it. I saw my eyes fouled with earth, my hair and beard dripping with blood-red earth, my skin gray and puffed as that of a crushed earthworm. It was the mask of a beast in its den, terrified, waiting.

But I must not anticipate. To preserve my sanity it is necessary that I take things in their order. That is the object of this confession: to tell things in their order, reasonably, precisely; to recover that man with his insolence, his irony, his ingenuity. By writing of him I become him for the time.

It was Major Quive-Smith who had shot me by the stream. I am sure of it because his subsequent behavior and his character (which by now I know as an old fox, outliving his contemporaries, knows the idiosyncrasies of the huntsman) correspond to those of the man who waited patiently over the sidecar, who called my name to make me turn my head.

Two days I spent recovering from the wound, light in itself but aggravated by all that sudden toil. On the third I emerged from my chimney and crawled from bush to bush along the edge of the eastern pasture until I reached an ivy-covered oak at the bottom of the lane. It was nearly dead, and a paradise of wood pigeons. From the top I could see the Marshwood Vale spread out as on a map, and I overlooked the courtyard of Patachon's farm.

Pat and Patachon are the names I have given to my two neighbors. I live unsuspected between them like an evil spirit, knowing their ways and their characters but not permitted to discover their true names. Pat, the farmer to whom the cows and the eastern hedge belong, is a tall, thin youth with a lined,

brown face, a habit of muttering to himself, and a soul embittered by bad home-made cider. His little dairy farm can barely pay its way; but he has an active wife with a lot of healthy poultry which probably produce all the ready cash. On the other hand she is prolific as her hens. They have six children with expensive tastes. I judge the kids by the fact that they suck sweets at the same time as eating blackberries.

Patachon, who owns the western hedge and the great gray farm, is a chunky, red-faced old rascal, always with a tall ash plant in his hand when he hasn't a gun. His terse Dorset speech delights his laborers, and is heard, I should guess, on a number of local boards. His land runs past the lower end of the lane, and round over the top of the hill, so that Pat's pasture is an enclave in the middle of it. On warm evenings he walks his side of the hedge in the hope of picking up rabbit or wood pigeon, but the only shots he has ever fired were at Asmodeus. The old poacher was too quick for him; all you can do to Asmodeus is to shoot where he ought to be but never is.

All morning I saw nothing of interest from the tree, but in the afternoon two men in a car drove into the yard of Patachon's farm and dropped a bag and a gun case. Then they bumped along the lower edge of the stubble, following the farm track which joined the serviceable portion of my lane. I guessed that they must be bound for Pat's farm; if they had been going beyond it, they would have taken a better road. I couldn't keep them under observation, for the southern slopes were much too dangerous in daylight. There were deep lanes which had to be crossed or entered, with no possibility of avoiding other pedestrians.

In half an hour they were back at Patachon's. One of the men got out and went indoors. The other drove the car away. Someone, then, had come to stay at the farm. I remained on watch in the tree, for I didn't like the look of things.



In the evening Patachon and his visitor emerged from the farmhouse with their guns under their arms, prepared for a stroll round the estate. They started towards the low-lying thickets at the western end of the farm, and I didn't see them again for an hour. Patachon owned a lot of rough land in that direction which I had never bothered to explore. I heard a few shots. A flight of three duck shot northwards and vanished in the dusk. A wood pigeon came homing to my tree, saw me, banked against the wind, and dived sideways with brilliant virtuosity. When I caught sight of the two guns again, they were stealing along the edge of the lane, separated from me only by the width of the two hedges. Patachon's visitor was Major Quive-Smith.

The farmer picked up a stone and flung it smack into the tree, just missing my feet. No pigeon flew out of the ivy, needless to say.

'And if 'e'd a bin there,' said Patachon bitterly, 'e'd a flewed t'other way.'

'He would,' agreed Major Quive-Smith. 'By Jove! I can't think why that fellow wouldn't let his little bit of shooting!'

That explained why he had gone to see Pat. And Pat, I am sure, refused his request rudely and finally.

'Sour man, 'e is!' said the farmer. 'Sour!'

'Does he shoot at all himself?'

'No. 'E baint a man for fun. But don't 'ee go botherin' 'im, Major, for there's nobbut in the 'edge this year.'

'How's that?' asked Quive-Smith.

I could see the swift, suspicious turn of his head, and hear the bark in the question.

'A perishin' cat! Can't trap un. Can't shoot un.'

'Very shy of man, I suppose?'

'Knows as well as we what us would do to un if us could catch un,' Patachon agreed.

I observed that the major carried one of those awkward German weapons

with a rifled barrel below the two gun barrels. As a rifle, it is inaccurate at 200 yards; as a gun, unnecessarily heavy. But the three barrels were admirably adapted to his purpose of ostensibly shooting rabbits while actually expecting bigger game.

I don't yet know Quive-Smith's true nationality or name. As a retired military man he had nearly, but not quite, convinced Saul. In his present part, a nondescript gentleman amusing himself with a farm holiday and some cheap and worthless shooting, there was no fault to be found. Tall, fair, slim, and a clever actor, he could pass as a member of half a dozen different nations according to the way he cut his hair and moustache. His cheekbones are too high to be typically English, but so are my own. His nose is that unmistakable Anglo-Roman which with few exceptions — again I am one of them — seems to lead its possessor to Sandhurst. He might have been a Hungarian or Swede, and I have seen faces and figures like his among fair-haired Arabs. I think he is not of pure European origin; his hands, feet, and bone structure are too delicate.

To rent the shooting over three quarters of the country where I was likely to be was a superb conception. He had every right to walk about with a gun and to fire it. If he bagged me, the chances were a thousand to one against the murder ever being discovered. In a year or two Saul would have to assume that I was dead. But where had I died? Anywhere between Poland and Lyme Regis. And where was my body? At the bottom of the sea or in a pit of quicklime if Quive-Smith and his unknown friend with the car knew their business.

I was glad of my two unconscious protectors: Asmodeus, whose presence in the lane made my own rather improbable, and Pat, who wouldn't have trespassers on his land and wouldn't let his little bit of shooting. I know that type of dyspeptic John Bull. When he has forbidden a person to enter his ground, he is

*Do your Feet  
trouble you?*

Foot trouble sometimes seems to develop suddenly, although the cause may actually have been present for a long time.

The most common foot trouble is the flattening of the long arch that extends from the heel to the big toe—known as “flat foot” or “fallen arch.” It is usually caused by “toeing out” or by improper shoes, either of which may put a severe strain upon this arch. When overstrained the arch flattens. One of the first symptoms is a pain in the calf of the leg.

Another common ailment, often accompanied by a troublesome callus, is a painful condition in the ball of the foot. This is frequently due to the sole of a shoe that bends down under the ball of the foot and up at the sides.

Much serious foot trouble may be avoided by wearing shoes and stockings that give satisfaction throughout the day. Shoes can be stylish *and* comfortable. Here are five points to consider in connection with foot comfort:

Is each shoe roomy above the toes, but snug at the heel and over the instep?

Are the shoes a little longer (by inside measurement) than your feet?

Does the sole under the ball of the foot lie flat?

Are you sure the shoes are not too pointed, nor too thin-soled?

Are your socks or stockings too short or too long for the foot?

Excessively high heels, especially the extremely narrow variety, may be responsible for many sore feet, contracted toes, calluses, and even for poor posture among women. Yet a sudden shift to low heels may also cause trouble. The muscles should be accustomed gradually to a lower heeled shoe.

Persons who suffer from severe foot defects should consult a competent foot specialist without delay. Correct treatment and properly constructed shoes can generally restore the foot to full usefulness and may also aid your posture.

In addition, you can do much to improve your posture by holding your body correctly—the back



straight, the chin at a right angle with the neck, the shoulders level and the chest up.

The Metropolitan booklet “Posture from the Ground Up” contains valuable information on the care of the feet and proper posture. It also tells how to overcome many foot ailments and how to safeguard children’s feet. A post card or the coupon will bring you a free copy.

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ready to desert the most urgent jobs merely to watch his boundary fence. Quive-Smith couldn't be prevented from exploring Pat's side of the hedge, but he would have to do it with discretion and preferably at night.

## XVII

I returned to my burrow, now no larger than it had been in the first few weeks, and much damper. I cursed myself for not having widened the chimney before I cleaned up the lane; I could then have thrown out the earth and allowed the rain to distribute it. The inner chamber was uninhabitable and so remains.

I stayed in my sleeping bag for two wretched days. I envied Quive-Smith. He was showing great courage in hunting single-handed a fugitive whom he believed to be desperate. Twice Asmodeus came home with a rush through the ventilation hole and crouched at the back of the den, untouchable and malignant — a sure sign that somebody was in the lane. I lay still underground. Desperate I was, and am, but I want no violence.

On the third afternoon I found the immobility and dirt no longer endurable, and decided to reconnoitre. Asmodeus was out, so I knew that there was no human being in the immediate vicinity. I hoped that Quive-Smith was already paying attention to some other part of the county, or at least to some other farm, but I warned myself not to underestimate his patience. I poked my filthy head and shoulders out into the heart of the blackberry bush and remained there, listening. It was a long and intricate process to leave the bush; I had to lie flat on the ground, separating the trailing thorny stems with gloved hands and pushing myself forwards with my toes.

I sat among my green fortifications, enjoying the open air and watching Pat's field and the sheep down beyond. It wasn't much to have under observation. Behind me was my own lane, and fifty

yards to my left the cross hedge in which was another lane running up to the down; there might have been a platoon of infantry in both for all that I could have seen of them or they of me. Opposite me was another hedge that separated Pat's pasture from Patachon's sheep; to my right, the skyline of the pasture.

About five o'clock Pat came into the field to drive the cows home himself — a task that hitherto he had always left to a boy — and remained for some time staring about him truculently and swinging a stick. At sunset Major Quive-Smith detached himself from a brown-scarred rabbit warren on the hillside, and put his field glasses back in their case. I had not the remotest notion that he was there, but, since I had been assuming he was everywhere, I knew he had not seen me. To let me see him I thought obliging.

He struck down the hillside into the lane leading to Patachon's farm. As soon as he was in dead ground I crawled to the corner to have a look at him while he passed beneath me. A clump of gorse covered me from observation from the pasture as I crouched in the angle of the hedges.

I waited, but he didn't come. Then it occurred to me that he must hate those deep tracks almost as much as I did; a man walking along them was completely at the mercy of anyone above him. So he was possibly behind the opposite hedge, working his way back to the farm across the fields. It seemed odd that he should take all that trouble when he could have gone home by the vale and run no risks whatever; it seemed so odd that I suddenly realized I had been outmanœuvred. He had shown himself deliberately. If I were haunting the lane, which he suspected, and out for revenge, of which he must have been sure, then I should have waited for him just in that corner where I was.

I turned round and peered through the gorse. He was racing silently down the slope towards me. He had decoyed me



## Corporations Distribute Wealth

A BIG corporation is pictured by many people as an octopus that stretches its tentacles into hundreds of communities and drains wealth from millions of people into the hands of a few capitalists. Actually, a big corporation is the most effective instrument that has ever been devised for the creation and widespread *distribution* of wealth.

The figures of one "big business" corporation illustrate this. In 1938 this corporation employed 189,000 people, who received more than \$300,000,000 in wages and salaries and spent their incomes locally in the many communities in which the corporation's activities are carried on.

The local purchasing power of thousands of other cities, towns and villages was increased by the incomes received by 130,000 additional people who work for the 20,000 sales

agencies that distribute the corporation's products. Many other businesses were likewise benefited, for more than \$500,000,000 of materials and services were purchased from thousands of different suppliers located in all parts of the country. Government and the public generally were benefited by tax payments of more than \$55,000,000.

The corporation's profit last year was 102 millions. This profit accrued to 389,000 stockholders in every State of the Union. Although even the profits were thus widely distributed, the important fact from the standpoint of national well-being is that the steps leading up to this profit necessitated the distribution to *people other than stockholders* of an amount 9 times as great as the profit achieved. This is proof of the broad social benefits of the profit system.

*(The company referred to above is the General Motors Corporation.)*

*As bankers for industry, and as trustee for the funds of others,  
it is part of our responsibility to contribute something to a  
better understanding of the facts about private business.*

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into the corner of two hedges, from which there was no escape.

He hadn't seen me. He didn't know I was there; he could only hope I was there. I tried a desperate bluff.

'Git off my land!' I yelled. 'Git off ut, I tell 'ee, or I'll 'ave the law on 'ee!'

It was a good enough imitation of Pat's high-pitched voice, but it wasn't very good Dorset. However, I speak my county dialect as richly as my old nurse, and we're near enough to the Bristol Channel to have the West Country burr. I hoped Quive-Smith had not learned to distinguish between dialects.

The major stopped in his stride. It was quite possible that Pat was standing in the lane and looking at him through the hedge, and he didn't want to quarrel more than could be helped.

'Go round by t' ga-ate, and git off my land!' I shouted.

'I say, I'm very sorry!' said Quive-Smith in a loud and embarrassed military voice—he was acting his part every bit as well as I was acting mine. 'Thought I'd be late for supper, you know. Just taking a short cut!'

'Well, cut oop ba-ack, dam' 'ee!' I yelled.

He turned, and strolled back up the field with offended dignity. I did not even wait for him to reach the skyline, for he might have lain down and continued observation. I sprinted along the twenty yards of straight hedge between the gorse and my own bramble patch, wriggled under the blackberry bush, and popped into my burrow. I remained till nightfall with my head and shoulders above ground, but heard no more of him.

I have a reasonable certainty that Quive-Smith will never discover the deception. Pat is sure to be rude and taciturn in any conversation. If the major apologizes when they next meet, Pat will accept the apologies with a grunt, and, if asked straight out whether or not he ordered the major off his land on such a day at such an hour, will allow it to be thought he did. My presence in

the lane is still not proved. Suspected, yes. Before Quive-Smith got home to supper, he had no doubt kicked himself for not walking right up to the angle of the hedges.

How much did he know? He had decided, obviously, that I had not been badly wounded; I had, after all, left the stream at a pace that defied pursuit, and there had not been a spot of blood. Then where was I? He had, I presumed, explored all the cover on Patachon's farm and on the two or three others over which he was shooting. He had found no trace of me except in the lane, and he knew that at some time it had been my headquarters. Was I still there? No, but I might return; the lane was well worth watching until the police or the public reported me elsewhere.

His general routine was more or less predictable. If he made a habit of scouting around Pat's pasture in daylight, he ran a real risk of being assaulted or sued for trespass, and he had at all costs to avoid drawing attention to himself by a large local row. By day, then, he might be on the high ground or in the lane itself or on Patachon's side of it. After dusk he would explore or lie up in the pasture.

I was confident that, under these circumstances, he would not find the mouth of my earth; but on one condition—that I cleaned it up and never used it again. There must not be a stem of the bush out of place, nor a blade of grass bent, nor any loose earth.

I resigned myself to remaining in the burrow, however unendurable. I have determined not to give way to impatience. I have been underground for nine days.

I dare not smoke or cook, but I have plenty of food: a large store of nuts and most of the tinned meat and groceries that I brought back from my last trips to Beaminster. Of water I have far more than I need. It collects in the sandstone channels that run like wainscoting along the sides of the den and





# The Bethlehem Steel Quiz

TRY IT ON THE FAMILY

Whether your sport is casting with a steel rod, knitting with steel needles, taking long drives to cool off, or traveling in the modern streamlined trains and planes and buses, you'll find interest and instruction in these questions on steel and steel-making. None requires a profound knowledge of one of the nation's basic industries, yet when you have answered all 10 of the questions, we suspect that you will have a better understanding of a number of phases of steel-making. To score 70 or better entitles you to self-congratulations if nothing else.

(Correct answers opposite page 287.)

1. The *Lord of the Isles*, first clipper ship constructed of iron, was built in:  
(a) East Boston (d) Bath, Maine  
(b) Baltimore (e) Portsmouth, N. H.  
(c) Great Britain
2. The two main steel cables of the Golden Gate Bridge which extend from anchorage to anchorage have a diameter of:  
(a) 6 inches (d) 15¾ inches  
(b) 12 feet (e) 25 inches  
(c) 36½ inches
3. The structural steel, in addition to the steel trim, wiring, piping and other steels, used in building the Empire State Building weighed:  
(a) 100,000 tons (d) 50,000 tons  
(b) 1,000,000 lbs. (e) 7,000,000 kilograms  
(c) 5,000 tons
4. Automobile engine cylinders are usually made of:  
(a) steel sheets (d) soy beans  
(b) cast iron (e) silicon steel  
(c) steel billets
5. Nails are made of steel wire, cut and cold-headed in an automatic machine which operates at a rate of:  
(a) 700 nails per hour  
(b) 600 nails per minute  
(c) 300 nails per second
6. The material known as "skelp" is:  
(a) flat steel strip  
(b) seaweed  
(c) seamless steel tubing  
(d) an alloy added to the open hearth
7. One of the important materials used in the blast furnaces where pig iron is manufactured is:  
(a) frogskin (d) willow logs  
(b) razorback hogs (e) peat moss  
(c) limestone
8. A greater tonnage of steel products is used in one of the following industries than in any other:  
(a) mining (d) railroad  
(b) shipbuilding (e) agriculture  
(c) automotive
9. The slag obtained as a "waste" product in the manufacture of iron and steel is used in manufacturing:  
(a) ladies' wrist watches (d) ships' binnacles  
(b) cement (e) galvanized steel  
(c) electric fans culverts
10. What large steel company fabricated and erected the Bonneville Dam Lock Gates, tallest lock gates in the world?

slops over on to the floor. Lest it should undermine the door I have driven two holes, half an inch in diameter, through to the lane, drilling with a tin-opener attached to the end of a stick. I keep them plugged during the day for fear that Quive-Smith might notice such unnatural springs.

Space I have none. The inner chamber is a tumbled morass of wet earth which I am compelled to use as a latrine. I am confined to my original excavation, the size of three large dog kennels, where I lie on or inside my sleeping bag. I cannot extend it. The noise of working would be audible in the lane.

I spend a part of each day wedged in the enlarged chimney, with my head out of the top; but that is more for change of position than for fresh air. The domed, prolific bush is so thick and so shadowed by its companions and by the hedge that I can only be sure it is day when the sun is in the east. The lifeless centre seems full of gases, unsatisfying in themselves and carrying in suspension the brown dust and debris that fall from above and the soot from my fires that has accumulated on the underside of the leaves.

Asmodeus, as always, is my comfort. It is seldom that one can give to and receive from an animal close, silent, and continuous attention. We live in the same space, in the same way, and on the same food, except that Asmodeus has no use for oatmeal, nor I for field mice. During the hours while he sits cleaning himself, and I motionless in my dirt, there is, I believe, some slight thought transference between us. I cannot 'order' or even 'hope' that he should perform a given act, but back and forth between us go thoughts of fear and dis-

connected dreams of action. I should call these dreams madness did I not know they came from him and that his mind is, by our human standards, mad.

All initiative is at an end. All luck is at an end. We are so dependent on luck, good and bad. I think of those men and women — cases faintly parallel to mine — who live in one room and eat poorly and lie in bed, since their incomes are too small for any marked activity. Their lives would be unbearable were it not for their hopes of good luck and fears of bad. They have, in fact, little of either; but illusion magnifies what there is.

I have no chance even of illusion. Luck has reached a state of equilibrium and stopped. I had one stroke of evil when that trailer innocently attracted the notice of the police, one stroke of magnificent luck when Quive-Smith's bullet hit the flask. In most other cases I have been able to account for the march of events by conscious planning or by my own instinctive and animal reactions under stress.

Now luck, movement, wisdom, and folly have all stopped. Even time has stopped, for I have no space. That, I think, is the reason why I have again taken refuge in this confession. I retain a sense of time, of the continuity of a stream of facts. I remind myself that I have extended and presumably will extend again in the time of the outer world. At present I exist only in my own time, as one does in a nightmare, forcing myself to a fanaticism of endurance. Without a God, without a love, without a hate — yet a fanatic! An embodiment of that myth of foreigners, the English gentleman, the gentle Englishman. I will not kill; to hide I am ashamed. So I endure without object.

*(To be concluded)*

---

*With each twelve months of the Atlantic*

**THREE GREAT BOOKS OF THE YEAR**

---

## Answers to Bethlehem Quiz

(See opposite page 286)

1. (c) *The Lord of the Isles*, first iron clipper ship, was launched in England in 1853.
2. (c) The two main cables of the Golden Gate Bridge, erected by Bethlehem Steel Company, each have a compacted diameter of 36½ inches.
3. (d) About 50,000 tons of structural steel were used in the Empire State Building.
4. (b) Automotive cylinders are usually made of cast iron.
5. (b) Typical modern machines make nails from steel wire at the rate of 600 nails per minute per machine.
6. (a) Skelp is flat steel strip often used in making butt- and lap-welded steel tubular products.
7. (c) Limestone, iron ore and coke are the three principal raw materials used in a blast furnace.
8. (c) The automotive industry requires about 21 per cent of the average annual steel output in the United States and is the largest single consumer of steel products.
9. (b) Slag is used in the manufacture of cement.
10. Bethlehem Steel Company.



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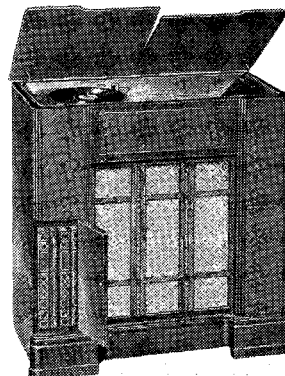
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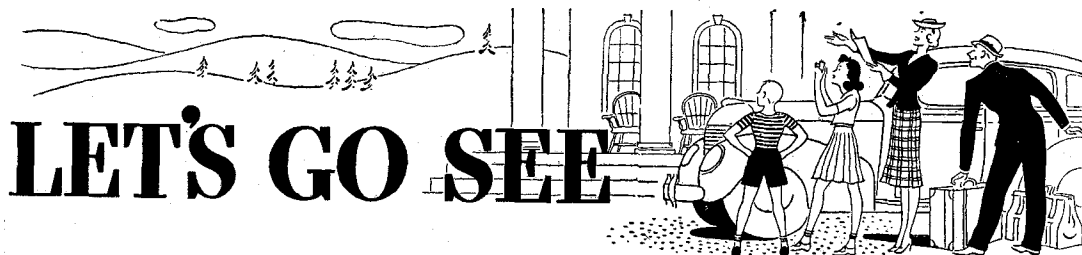
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# LET'S GO SEE

**I**N spite of the fact that every day on which the temperature doesn't hit 70 several wiseacres remind you that after the hurricane a hundred years ago there was a period of months euphemistically called the Summer That Was Not a Summer, things seem to be warming up nicely. Pavements are soft underfoot. . . .

**T**HERE'S always a breeze on the water. You can ride around for three hours on a Manhattan



Yacht Cruise. Makes you realize the city really is an island. . . . These leave West 42nd Street three times daily. As do also the Hudson River Day Line boats, which go way up to Spuyten Duyvil, down around the Statue of Liberty, and end up — of all places! — at the Fair. . . . Takes four hours. . . .

**D**own at Liberty Pier you can get a boat to the Jersey coast. Right out to Sandy Hook and back; or get off at Atlantic Highlands and take a train to Point Pleasant. . . . Perfect surf swimming on those long white beaches. Best of all at the Phipps Estate down below Mantoloking. . . . It's a little trouble to get in there. You have to buy a season's fishing license, and there are five miles of rough dirt road. But it's worth it. No houses; holly trees as big as oaks; virtually no people. The place might be Papeete. . . . Ascending some in the boat scale — the new *Mauretania* sails July 29. . . . The public can go aboard her while she's at Pier 90. 'Queen of the seas' business. Worth an hour's time. . . . You could eat reasonably near by, at Janet of France, on West 52nd Street. . . .

**O**f course the great take-off spectacle is the *Clipper*. Every Wednesday from Fort Washington for Horta, Lisbon, Marseilles. . . . Curious. This Portugal over which the giant hums so haughtily was a great clipper country herself, when it meant sails and months, not wings and hours. The Portuguese captains were the first to bring Chinese art to Europe. . . . Up on 57th

Street, Isabella Barclay has an eighteenth-century painted *boiserie* room from Portugal which was sophisticatedly beautiful when the Indians were camping on Wall Street. . . .

**B**UT older by three centuries are the Tarot cards, part of the summer exhibit at the Pierpont Morgan Library. Lombard artists painted into their intricate designs their fervent belief that the answers lay in the deck. . . . Well, no competent fortuneteller goes hungry, even now.

**B**EGINNING August 4, the American Fine Arts Galleries will house the fiftieth anniversary exhibit of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. . . . Lots of water has run under the bridge since a little braided hair-work and a nice hand with the worsteds were all a Female Academy young lady should decently do. . . . Incidentally, Mr. Dali has turned to prose, in the shape of a pale green manifesto



of his ideas which came in our mail the other day. We didn't understand it very well. . . . Seems *everything* is to be green. . . .

**W**ALKING down Madison from 57th is a window-shopper's paradise. . . . Anything from ten cents' worth of perfume to a wicker bird cage from Rena Rosenthal or one of those huge lawn chairs from Abercrombie and Fitch which are a glorification of the one Great-uncle Matthew sent home from Madras. . . . Pitt Petri's summer china in the form of cauliflowers and lettuce and tomatoes looks like Longchamps' windows. . . . Much the same promise of luxury is held out in W. and J. Sloane's Bath Shop. They have things worked out so you can carry on your entire existence in the tub if you want to. . . . One broker we know times his morning bath by playing the *Marche Funèbre*. Personally we find Gracie Fields's *Trek Song* more bracing. . . . It's a Rex record. Maybe at the Gramophone Shop's new air-conditioned place at 290 Park — or at their old stand on 48th. . . .



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**GRANTED** you'd like to take something home to the folks, bear in mind that the lost-and-found departments from Flushing to Abilene, Kansas, are piled high with unclassifiable objects in the form of the Trylon and/or Perisphere. They may be quaint in 1990; right now they are straight horror. . . . But at Tourneau, 425 Madison, you can spend your dollar for one of the best gadgets we have seen: key ring with a tag which is exact color and number replica of your car's license plate. . . .

**UNLESS** you know more than most, better resist the 'antique' jewelry shops, too. . . . If you want a fair chance at that sort of thing the Provident Loan Society — largest, oldest, and most reliable pawnbrokers in the city — have auctions every month. One day dealers; one day the public. . . . Call their executive offices for the dates. . . .

**THE** Chatham's outdoor terrace is as good as the food. . . . The St. Regis roof is very swell,



and you can, if you like, play something called Patty-Cake with a lot of pretty girls from Hollywood. . . . But you'll look awfully silly doing it.

**ONE** brand-new musical show is going strong. *Streets of Paris*; sort of the same roughhouse manner as *Hellzapoppin*, and very, very funny. . . . Portuguese comes in again here, being the only language Carmen Miranda speaks. This is her first New York appearance, and, from all signs, by no means her last. . . .

**THE** Fifth Avenue Playhouse is having its annual International Film shows. Gives you a chance to see good ones like *Modern Times* again. . . . Find out if they will show *The City*, which



has left the Fair now. . . . Near by is the Brevoort's sidewalk café. . . . The Brevoort's basement and the back room at the Plaza are reassuringly, courteously eternal. . . .

**NOT** so some of the big restaurants at the Fair. Since chic New York has taken to dining and watching the lights, the places around the Lagoon are so fantastically successful that the

headwaiters are paranoiacs of arrogance. . . . Takes a humble spirit and a long purse to weather it. . . .

**BUT** the Smithfield ham sandwiches and iced tea are fine. One of their stands is near the Railroads Building. . . . And, for all its great big strong engines, *Railroads on Parade* is, as a show, a good deal like an Old Home Week pageant some place. . . . (*We've all worked so hard over it, really! Don't you think Martha's Willy is a sketch?*)

**AS** the weeks roll along, the most satisfactory outside murals are Ezra Winter's on the States Building, Griffith Coale's on the Railroads Building, Pierre Bourdelle's on Food North and the Heinz Building. . . . The mechanized interior mural by Billings in the Ford Building is curiously fascinating — a sort of robot Mesmer. . . . Ford's little wooden men evolving basic products are fun. . . . But the lady at the information booth does not strike that folksy Dearborn note. More on the exiled Marchioness side, and weary, too. . . .

**IT**'s actually cold in the Chrysler Forest, and they let you sit down far enough from the Talking Car so you don't have to listen. . . . On several of the super-future highways in General Motors super-futurama, a few of the tiny super-future cars are stalled. Bang in the middle of the 1960 traffic! . . . *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, I always say. . . .



**THE** most irresistibly funny sight in the whole place is the rear view of Roma, sitting, it appears, on five or six upturned peach baskets. . . . Still, like many other ladies, she looks very well at night, from the front. . . .

**SO** does the whole Flushing Festival from the late plane to Boston. . . . Next best way to avoid the north-bound traffic is to put your car on the night boat. . . .

**LOTS** of things going on in the New England hills. Though you needn't have a serious purpose to drive through the valleys, over the divides, around the village greens. . . . The six concerts of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival take place from August 3 to 13. All 5700 seats in the amazing Shed are to be reserved this year. By mail, in advance. . . . Koussevitzky is, of course, conducting, and the announced program



# Announcing

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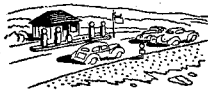
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is magnificently varied. . . . The great trees at Tanglewood escaped the hurricane. . . . Nearest large inns are the Red Lion at Stockbridge and the Curtis Hotel at Lenox. You'll find rooms have been engaged months ahead. . . .



**RAISES** the whole question of overnight stops on motor trips. . . . Village post offices always know who takes boarders. Lots of off-the-beaten-track farmhouses with Tourists signs are better than small-town drummer's hotels.

**UP** in Swanzey Center, New Hampshire, July 27-29, they are putting on an elaborate revival of Denman Thompson's *Old Homestead*. Perfect setting for it. . . .

**NEW** Hampshire's small bite of seacoast is beautiful. . . . Ham's, in Portsmouth, have incomparable sea food. . . . Little Boar's Head Inn hangs on the cliffside. . . . In North



Hampton, Mrs. Roland Baker raises her splendid Old English sheep dogs; architecturally hers are the most attractive small kennels we have ever seen. . . .

**AT** Pembroke is a WPA research herb garden. They will tell you all they know. . . . For that matter, the WPA *American State Guides* are so good that they're about as necessary to a motor trip as Express checks. . . .

**THANKS** to the skiers, New Hampshire's inns have expanded and improved. Also the hospitals. . . . Seems Thoreau was the first on record to hurt himself in Tuckerman's Ravine, but he only sprained his ankle. . . . Ski snow lasts well into July this year. . . . Peckett's Inn, on Sugar Hill, and the old Hanover Inn at Hanover are especially nice. . . .

**SINCE** Rudyard Kipling, in the '90s, moved to Dummerston, outside Brattleboro, and there wrote, among others, the *Jungle Books*, a lot of writers have lived in Vermont. . . . (Incidentally, Kipling's house, *Naulakha*, can be rented. . . . He didn't, as you remember, get on very well with the Green Mountain boys. . . .) Characters ranging from Frost's Hired Man to the Earthworm Tractor are being produced in these hills. . . .

**THE** Breadloaf School of English is now in session. Lasts until August 12; on August 16 the Breadloaf Writers Conference begins its two weeks. . . . Middlebury town, perhaps to offset all this, is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Morgan family who bred the horses. . . . The small wooden-bowl factory at Granville is a delight. Smells so nice, too. . . . The Regency toyhouse in Orford, built by Judge Wilcox for his office, is enough to make a commuter weep. . . . Add oddities: the Brigham Young monument at Whittington, and the Bowman edifice at Cuttingsville — egocentricity gone mad in a Rogers group. . . .

**THE** Dorset Players open July 21. . . . Town and Inn are wholly charming. Something like the White Cupboard at Woodstock. . . .



**ENDLESSLY** beautiful, Vermont is. . . . The interior valley north from Bethel and on through Smuggler's Notch is our favorite. . . . Peacham is unforgettable. . . . Miss Choate will take guests in her house there, besides having excellent food. . . . Of course to walk or ride a horse through the mountains is to see a new world. The New England Council in Boston will give you details of trails. . . . The good little Stone Fence Inn on Putney Road will tell you the place in Brattleboro to hire reliable horses. . . .

**THE** Williamstown Institute of Human Relations conference is from August 27 through September 1. Reservations ahead will get you rooms in the college dormitories. Stimulating and distinguished people always there. . . . Address the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 300 Fourth Avenue, New York. . . .

**AROUND** about then the state and county fairs will begin. . . . Tractors and patchwork quilts. . . . Fat stock and cotton candy. . . . New York shop windows turning their thoughts to campuses, and the hill trees showing faintly red. . . .

*Stop Light*

